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TEAMWORK IN WASHINGTON: CONVERSION TO WAR

BY WAYNE COY

[LIAISON OFFICER for the President's Office of Emergency Management, Wayne Coy speaks with unique authority on the workings of our government offices in this national crisis. Although he is little known to the general public, his vigor and administrative skill have made him, at age thirty-eight, one of the key figures of our war effort. — THE EDITOR]

WE NOW have a better working government than France or England had at the start of the war; it is better than we ever had in the last war,' a friend of mine recently said. 'In fact, if it continues as it is, it will probably be the best government that ever lost a war.'

While it suffers somewhat from epigrammatic oversimplification, this statement does put dramatically the present state of our government. A great deal has been done to improve the working of government, but more improvement is essential to victory.

There was, after all, much to be done. For after more than a century of asking government to be deliberative and cautious and painstaking — to be everything but speedy — we have suddenly required government to meet the quick-changing demands of modern warfare.

The tremendous change involved in our present attitude can be seen by comparing attitudes of the most recent past. It was less than a year and a half ago that the Congress, with considerable public enthusiasm, enacted the Walter-Logan Administrative Procedure Bill. This bill, which would now be law but for a Presidential veto, was intended to make most government agencies act in the manner of courts. The high purpose was creditable enough, but today the idea seems frighteningly grotesque as we see instance after instance where a few hours' delay can affect the lives of many of our men. For under the procedure of courts, our judges are still engaged with matters arising in the war effort of 1917.

Exceptions from the provisions of the Walter-Logan Bill were, to be sure, made for the War and Navy Departments. But that only underscores the unre-

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paredness of our attitude toward government. We are now in total war. Our factories, power plants, trains, and workers are intimately involved in the struggle, and time-consuming procedures in the government departments concerned with those matters can be as great an interference to winning the war as similar procedures would be in the armed services. That is the dominant fact about government today. Just as the conduct of every private citizen has its bearing on the war effort, so do the methods of the Food and Drug Administration, the Bituminous Coal Division, or the Post Office Department. Equipping government for war involves more than proper action from the War and Navy Departments; it involves action suited to wartime from every government agency and every government employee.

In gauging the progress that has been made, it is therefore necessary to remember that we began with a government almost as ill-adapted to modern warfare as our civilian plants were ill-adapted to making tanks and guns and planes. We needed, and we still need, what has been termed the 'conversion of government.' Already peacetime procedures have been overhauled, greater authority has been delegated to subordinates, organizations have been rearranged and streamlined, a better sense of urgency has developed. But much remains to be accomplished if government is to achieve victory. That is what my epigrammatic friend had in mind. And, in all fairness, I think his pronouncement is not true of government alone. He could have added that overall improvement is needed or we shall have the most energetic industry, the most coöperative trade unions, the most alert press, the best bankers and lawyers and doctors and public generally that ever lost a war.

The 'conversion of government' which we have already achieved has in great measure involved the conversion of formal organization. Agencies have been created and abolished and reorganized.

Authorities have been spelled out and delegated and redelegated. Organization charts have been drafted, redrafted, and redrafted again. The 'machinery' of government has been intensively refurbished for war.

But, like all other machinery, it cannot work satisfactorily without men, without the minds of men. The final, successful conversion of government depends upon the conversion of men's minds. The matter is so well put by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry that no one will mind quotation of words he wrote in these pages two months ago:—

Here was another of the war's absurdities. Nothing worked properly. Our world was made up of gearwheels that refused to mesh. And where the gearwheels refused to mesh, there was obviously no watchmaker.

After nine months of war we had still not succeeded in persuading the industries concerned that aerial cannon and controls ought to be manufactured with regard to the climate of the upper altitudes in which they were employed. What we were up against was not the irresponsible attitude of the manufacturers. Men are for the most part decent and conscientious. I am sure that almost always their lack of initiative is a result and not a cause of their ineffectualness. . . .

If a bomb had reduced the Air Ministry to ashes, a corporal — any corporal at all — would have been summoned, and the government would have said to him: 'You are ordered to see that the controls are thawed out. You have full authority. It's up to you. But if they are still freezing up two weeks from now you go to prison.'

II

By now we are all familiar with the kind of events that de Saint-Exupéry recounts. To the failure to manufacture controls that did not freeze, all of us could add stories of the propellers which were stored in French warehouses instead of being sent to the airfields, of the bridges which were not blown up at invasion time, of the tanks which were made without guns, and so on. To per-

sons with less insight than de Saint-Exupéry these have been put down as proof that France was riddled with treason.

Treason there probably was in France. But also there were the months of 'phoney war' which lulled the minds of Frenchmen into believing that ordinary habits were adequate for winning the war. Surely that lack of imagination, that clinging to outmoded routines, must have been responsible for much of what now passes as treachery.

For in this country almost anyone familiar with our defense and war efforts can give examples of incidents almost as foolishly wrong as the things that were done in France. These incidents did not occur because of anyone's lack of loyalty. They occurred, and more like them are occurring, because the remoteness of the battle fronts permits men to forget for the moment the size of our danger. Let us look at actual cases which would not have been permitted to take place by men aware that they are dealing with life and death.

Last summer we were shipping steel under Lend-Lease to the British Isles and some of it was reshipped from there to the arsenals of South Africa, India, Malaya, and other parts of the British Empire. American and British officials in London quickly urged by cable that this policy of running steel twice through Hitler's U-boats be stopped, and that direct shipments be made from the United States. In Washington a staff member of the agency concerned proposed an answer which would have rejected the suggestion. He contended that there would be too great difficulties in 'paper work' involved if requests of different parts of the Empire were handled separately. He had got so buried in the form sheets he worked with all day that they appeared to him more formidable than Nazi submarines.

In midsummer we had only one factory producing an essential part of a defensive weapon which was vitally

needed on merchant ships. Other sources of production were in the offing, but existing weapons were precious. It developed that this factory had somehow badly underestimated its costs and that it would lack money to keep up production unless the contract was altered. Men were dying on unprotected ships. Clearly the weapons were badly enough needed to warrant any cost. But the officials of the agency which was buying them delayed matters for a week while they suggested that the factory be put in bankruptcy. Such a proceeding would certainly have interrupted production and even might have stopped it altogether. It was as though the officials were bargaining for soap in peacetime, in a buyer's market.

Attacks on our tankers in the Atlantic were menacing the fuel supplies needed by arsenals here and in Britain. Yet none of our tankers were being fully used. A treaty of 1931 with some thirty nations (including Germany, Italy, and Japan) had set 'load lines' short of full capacity, beyond which tankers were not to be loaded. The load lines had been established as a safety measure and also to limit competition at a time when we seemed to have too many tankers. By 1941 it was clear that nothing was as unsafe as being without fuel and that we were not in danger from excess competition. It was equally clear that the Axis nations were not abiding by the treaty and that we were entitled to declare the treaty suspended. Secretary of State Hull had already declared to the Congress that the only international law in an Axis-threatened world was the law of self-defense, and Mr. Jackson, while he was Attorney General, had joined in those sentiments in an address at Havana. But for weeks no action was taken while various officials argued about the legal form in which the suspension of the treaty should be phrased. This delay had the same effect as if eight of our tankers had been put out of action by submarines during this period.

It was essential to conserve our supply of a product which, because of military requirements, will be critically scarce during the war. The person charged with obtaining maximum production of the product called together representatives of five or six agencies concerned with its military use, its export to friendly nations, its importation from available foreign sources, and other aspects of the problem. Several days were consumed in estimating the supplies which would be available and the essential civilian and military demands. Recommendations of several steps to eliminate nonessential uses were then prepared for presentation to the officials who could order the necessary action. Unfortunately, the person who had started the matter had forgotten to inform officials of another branch in his department who also had an interest in the matter. The mistake was not unnatural. There are often several branches concerned with a single problem and it is easy to overlook one of them. One would have expected the officials who had been overlooked to examine the recommendations on which much time had been spent, to add any additional thoughts of their own, and then to cooperate in the common effort of having proper action taken. Instead they complained that their jurisdiction had been meanly and unpardonably invaded; they set about preparing their own recommendations, which of necessity were in large measure repetitious of what had been done; they managed to create an obstruction for several days and to bring to despair the other persons involved.

Three weeks after Pearl Harbor, when our soldiers and our Allies' soldiers were critically in need of arms, conferences were taking place about stopping the production of automobiles. Eventually it was decided that thirty or forty days should be devoted to making 200,000 new cars before the factories were prepared for war work. During the conferences one official protested against any

further production of automobiles and was told that otherwise more than \$100,000,000 in inventories would not be used. 'Hell,' he replied, 'we ought to give up ten times that much if it will save the lives of any of our soldiers.' The other officials told him he was hysterical and went back to making nice computations about how the inventories could be most efficiently used, how the new cars could best be spread around, and so forth.

Now it is by no means clear that the decision on automobile production was not the correct one. It may well be that the quickest way of getting the factories ready for war work was to clear out their inventories by making new cars. The decision was finally approved by officials who are most alert to our pressing needs. But it is frightening that so soon after Pearl Harbor several officials thought a person 'hysterical' who was only reckoning with reality, who was merely discussing a life and death situation in the language of life and death.

The outbreak of the war made plain the need for expanding the production of a certain product, and officials in Washington began the necessary arrangements. A member of Congress who is generally a most competent person intervened. He had long been opposed to the large producer, for he thought it had a monopoly position harmful to the future of his community. He contended that this concern should be permitted to expand only after the ability of the smaller producers to expand had been exhausted. It was obvious to everyone else that the war cannot be won by using only large producers or only small producers, and that all possible expansion by everyone was required. As a result the officials in charge framed the program to fit the member's contention in order to avoid the further delay of an open fight. This unnecessary work, however, took up considerable time and the needed production will come weeks later than it should have.

There was nothing willful in the ob-

struction of the member of Congress — only a failure to realize the extremity of our position. Had he faced the question whether to encourage the expansion of the large producer or surrender to Hitler, he would not have taken his position. Instead he somehow held to the view that there is time to defeat the Axis in the particular manner most palatable to his personal desires, a view which was widely held in lands now overrun.

As this is written, the Dutch East Indies port of Soerabaja is under attack. The arms that are there for resistance were limited by the shipping the Allies had available, so every foot of shipping space should have been carefully conserved. Yet one of the last ships to reach the port was carrying thousands of empty beer bottles. They had been ordered and the permit and shipping arrangements for their export had been made months ago, before war broke out in the Far East. The order and the permit and the shipping arrangements started what de Saint-Exupéry calls 'a machine' working. Nobody stopped the machine because nobody thought of the Dutch trying to hold back the Japanese with beer bottles. Just as nobody in France had thought of pilots flying over Germany with controls that froze.

III

These stories should not be taken as typical of the work of government, for they are not. They are the trouble spots of government and some of them will always occur in government or in any other institution. Some of them occur because of faulty organization or because of inadequate administrative methods. Those matters are fast being set right in government, but even the most perfectly constructed organizations and procedure cannot eliminate these trouble spots. For organizations and procedures are only what men make of them, and not just the top men at that. The will of the President and men of Cabinet

rank cannot alone prevent the recurrence of such instances of mismanagement. In final analysis the ability of our government to meet its present task will depend on the *esprit de corps* of the operating personnel — from sub-Cabinet members to messenger boys.

This great working force of government must be lifted out of the workaday habits of peacetime bureaucracy. They must find a will for action that is attuned to our awesome needs. That is true of Assistant Secretaries who have spent time manœuvring for control of new authority. It is true of reception clerks at the War Department who lackadaisically keep men waiting a quarter of an hour for admission badges. It is true of lawyers who delay important matters in order to perfect the drafting of instruments, as though they were writing a will in peacetime. It is true of timid field officers, who let shortsighted superiors in Washington block matters that they know must be speeded.

The main obstacle to the lift in spirit which is needed lies in the intangibility of the government's affairs. At the end of a day the government official cannot see the lost lines which should have been held, the enemy resistance which should have been overcome, or the damaged batteries which must be reinforced. Soldiers and sailors on the fronts can see these things and adjust their efforts. The men at Pearl Harbor, upon viewing the damage, needed no Roberts report to learn that all was not well with their system of administration. But in Washington, where maladministration can affect the outcome of the war as much as anything soldiers and sailors may do, men can remain unaware of causing disasters. It is difficult to take a bureau chief, or a lawyer, or a stenographer aside and say, 'Look! A hundred men are wounded because of your delay! A ship has been sunk because of your mismanagement!'

There are doubtless some gains to be had from structural changes in organi-

zation. At the same time there could be helpful changes of personnel, for any endeavor as large as our war effort is bound to have a sprinkling of dunderheads and even willful obstructionists. The main evil, however, lies in general inability to grasp the fact that the enemy is upon us though we cannot see his fire. Even if all existing personnel and all lines of authority were frozen for the duration, we could greatly speed victory by constantly keeping sight of the immediacy of our danger and the preciousness of time.

Certainly British officers at Dunkirk did not worry about keeping meticulous records of the supplies they handed out to the withdrawing troops. Local officials in Russia and China and the Dutch

East Indies did not await detailed memoranda of instructions before putting into effect the scorched earth policy. The men in Bataan know that a faulty decision made in a few minutes is better than a perfect solution offered days too late.

Men who are aware that life depends on their actions simply cannot continue the interminable conferences, the buck-passing, the jurisdictional disputes, the reliance on peacetime formalities that now are nauseatingly overabundant. Seemingly men can only perceive such obvious things under great pressure. The officers of government must somehow learn that in a very real sense they are standing precariously on the cliffs while the enemy is pouring up the beaches.

BLAMING THE BRITISH

BY DAVID L. COHN

I

IF I were employed by Hitler or Hirohito as an agent in America, I should spend my time damning and baiting the British. I should do what many of the American dupes of the Axis — conscious and unconscious — are already doing. I should say, or cause it to be said, that the British are treacherous, stupid, arrogant, selfish, blundering, and even cowardly; that they are the architects of our woes; the people who dragged us into a war that is no concern of ours, and who will eventually drag us down to defeat with them. Nothing could be more disastrous to our cause or more helpful to our enemies. Yet these things are now being said and written in the United States. Moreover, as it is likely that the war will continue to go against the United

Nations for some time, the volume and shrillness of such anti-British pronouncements may be expected to increase. They will come in part from well-meaning but frustrated Americans in search of a scapegoat upon whom to place the blame for our own defeats and shortcomings. But they will come in larger measure from unreconstructed isolationists, hardened appeasers, last-ditch fascists, and those who hate Roosevelt more than they love their country. They dare not state their aims openly, but they may project them covertly and safely by baiting Britain.

In the Congress, for example, Representative Hoffman of Michigan told the country on January 27, 1942, that it is Britain's policy to save the British

while the devil may take the Americans. 'England,' he said, 'has been taking care of herself, and she and Australia are now asking us to save them while our own fighting men are dying on our own soil.' This is a repetition of the old but apparently ever-effective 'perfidious Albion' story. The Nazis used it with brilliant success as part of their plan to defeat the French by setting them against the British — 'England will fight to the last Frenchman.' Mr. Hoffman, however, is not content to denounce merely Britain — that is the province of little men. He condemns her and all of her (our) allies except the Dutch.

When he sat down his colleague, Representative Shafer of Michigan, arose. Trembling with indignation, he seemed about to denounce the barbarities of the Nazi and the Jap. But not at all. British treachery had kindled the flame of his awful anger. The British, he told the House, are as treacherous as the Japanese since there is no distinction between their attack upon the French fleet at Oran and the Japanese attack upon Pearl Harbor. What is the totality of these statements by the Michigan Congressmen? It is that we are fighting to save the British Empire — a story whose bearded venerability must bring it some measure of respect even if its whiskers are palpably false. It is, further, that the British are treacherous — 'perfidious Albion' again. But the new twist is that, even if we survive the treachery of the British, we shall play second fiddle after the war to a lot of Russians, Chinese, Hottentots, and Indians. Therefore, reads the unstated conclusion, if we had any sense, if we were patriotic Americans, we would make peace now and let the scum of the earth fend for themselves.

Outside Congress, and sometimes from unexpected sources, the attack on the British scales the peaks of vituperation and hysteria. Here is Samuel Grafton, columnist of the *New York Post*, interventionist, and anti-fascist, who assails

what he calls the 'Conservative Party hacks' in Great Britain, and at the same time reads a lesson to the Admiralty in a politico-military polemic which indicates that the writer is capable of running the British Government with one hand without letting it know that the other is running the British Navy. If the Admiralty had any brains, he says, it would not have bombed the German battleships *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* one hundred and ten times at Brest. According to this salt-encrusted columnist, it is nonsense to bomb battleships piecemeal; he would have sunk them at once in an 'all-out attack on the Nazi ships.' This of course never occurred to the Admiralty, and now it is too late for it to adopt Horatio Nelson Grafton's suggestion, since his column did not appear until the ships had escaped to Helgoland. What makes the British so stupid? asks this authority as he leaves the shell-torn quarterdeck for his desk. It is, he answers, that 'their approach to the war has always been domestic and cozy.' One understands from this that aggressiveness and tenacity are no longer British qualities but are mere words that lie cold and clammy amid their tea things, while the war to this quaint people is a mildly interesting phenomenon far less arresting than an unexplainable crocus springing up in winter on Golder's Green.

In his bluewater rage, Mr. Grafton does not say that British bombings kept two 26,000-ton German ships immobile for a year. And when they escaped, he has no words of admiration for the dash and courage of destroyer commanders who drove within two thousand yards of the giant German guns before releasing their torpedoes. He is unable even to summon up a trace of compassion for two hundred or more young Englishmen who died in forty-two planes as they flew their craft into a hell of gunfire and blinding snow and the leaden hail of constantly renewed squadrons of German fighters.

So much for thunder on the left. Let us now hear it on the right. Mr. Grafton, the interventionist, must be surprised to find himself ranged alongside Mr. William Randolph Hearst, the isolationist, as that lifelong warrior for beauty and truth opens up from his ink-splattered trench at San Simeon. Never one to attack an enemy piecemeal — thereby differing sharply from the British Admiralty — Mr. Hearst first demands nothing less than the resignation of Mr. Churchill. Granted that this demand, coming from an American, is not without impudence; granted further that Mr. Hearst might become pro-British if the English press demanded the resignation of Mr. Roosevelt, one can still imagine what would happen here if the English press should make such a demand. This, however, is but a beginning. Mr. Hearst sees the war as a conflict between the White Races and the Yellow Races and says so in a paragraph that Dr. Goebbels might envy: —

‘What is vital to the British Empire and to America and to *all the Occidental nations* is the renaissance of Asia, the revolt and reunion of the Eastern nations, the release of the unleashed Yellow Peril, and the mighty menace that arises . . . from the Orient to threaten the white man’s leadership in the progress and possession of the world.’ (Italics mine)

In Mr. Hearst’s view, since Japan is a menace to ‘all the Occidental nations,’ she is consequently an enemy of Germany and Italy as much as she is an enemy of Great Britain and the United States. It is she who is to be feared and not Hitler and Mussolini, who — presumably — are not out to destroy the democracies at all but are merely indulging in a rather elephantine practical joke at their expense. It appears that Japan is our sole enemy — and the Chinese also, since they are yellow-skinned Asiatics.

The rise of the Yellow Peril is, of course, the fault of the British led by

Mr. Churchill, who is, says Mr. Hearst, a man so blind that he ‘apparently cannot see beyond the illumination of his ever-present cigar.’ Yet, although he does not know how to fight a war or exorcise the Yellow Peril, he is nonetheless so diabolically clever that ‘he has succeeded in dragging the United States into England’s entanglements . . . and making the United States the victim of England’s and Churchill’s mistakes and misfortunes.’ Thus the Anglo-American wartime association is one of the blind leading the blind. No matter how stupid Mr. Churchill may be, the American people must be even more stupid since they were dragged into the war by the cigar-besotted Prime Minister.

In other circles, one hears other things. If the British fight well, it is because, of course, they have been supplied with American planes and tanks which inevitably are ‘the best in the world.’ (One wonders how Britons saved themselves in the vast air battles of 1940 after the fall of France when only British weapons, skill, and courage saved them — and ourselves — from destruction.) But when Britain is defeated, even though aided by American machines which are the best in the world, it is because of her stupidity, smugness, and the strangling Old School Tie. So much for the fighting. What of the aftermath? If we struggle through to victory with the inert British strangling our whipcord Yankee necks, we shall have struggled merely to save England’s repulsive, undemocratic caste system, while at the same time there is no doubt that the ingrates will abandon the caste system for socialism and so imperil our political and economic system here in America. They’re clever, those British; they’ll fool you every time.

Summing up the anti-British speeches, writings, and talk in and out of Congress, it appears that we have everything to lose and nothing to gain by fighting the war through to victory. And since the British are treacherous we had better

hurry to make the best peace available right now because they may sign up first and leave us holding the bag.

II

These conclusions, of course, are not plainly stated by anti-British writers and speakers, but the implications may be read by all except the blind. They constitute in their repetition a dangerous onslaught upon Allied unity at a time when unity is inseparable from victory, and when disunity, born of mutual hatred and suspicion, is an essential condition precedent to defeat.

This is not to say that even well-meaning Americans have no 'right' to criticize Britain's conduct of the war. It is to say that such criticism on our part is superfluous because the British attend to that task exceedingly well, while whatever we may say about them is weak and pale by comparison with what they say about themselves. In this all-important respect they have been, and continue to be, free, civilized, and adult. If you would compile a dictionary of anti-British invective, it would be a mistake to turn to the speeches of Hitler, Mussolini, or American Congressmen when there is available a rich repertoire of searing epithets applied by Britons to Britain.

Even if we were to indulge ourselves recklessly in the heady and dangerous luxury of sniping at the British, fairness would dictate that we first give them credit for what they have done since the beginning of the war long ago in September 1939. First of all, the British saved us from destruction. When France fell in 1940, the British Isles faced with unblinking courage the massed might of the greatest military machine the world has ever known and, defeating it in the air above Britain, saved themselves and gave us precious, indispensable time for arming and awakening. If Britain had fallen in 1940 when we stood weak and unarmed, what American, knowing what

he now knows, could deny that we should have been easy prey to the combined power of Germany and Japan?

But if British airmen could not conceive of defeat, neither could British civilians. With steadfast courage they joined their soldiers of the air in gaining the long interval that is essential to their own salvation and ours.

It is well for us to remember that up to December 7, 1941, all our fighting had been done for us by other peoples, especially the British and the Russians. Now we shall have to shoulder a mighty burden. When Americans go Britain-baiting, let them bear in mind that only a few months ago the House came within one vote of beating a bill to extend the Selective Service Act and keep the Army intact. If one vote had gone the other way, we should have had no army at all. Let them recall that we failed to fortify Guam, inadequately fortified the Philippines, and were not alert at Pearl Harbor; that at the Washington Naval Conference of 1922 we almost scuttled the Navy while simultaneously giving control of the Western Pacific to Japan; that, in an economy drive, we did not build a single capital ship for more than ten years and nearly let the Navy perish for lack of men and material; while only yesterday we were torn by the question of trading fifty old destroyers to Britain or selling her goods on a cash-and-carry basis. That was the time, you recall, when the war in Europe was just a squabble that was no concern of ours.

America and Britain are not only the last outposts of liberty left in a bleeding world, but they are, with their allies, the last hope of liberty for all men everywhere. Faced, then, with the supreme task of saving themselves and charged with the hopes of nearly all mankind, it is inconceivable that men of good will on either side should indulge in baiting the other and so imperil all that men have been struggling for during the past two thousand years.

PORTRAIT OF A PROFESSOR

BY OSCAR LEWIS

I

I HAD been away for the week-end. When I got back to town on a Sunday night I found, along with some other mail on my desk, a package bearing the label of the fine old publishing house of Howison & Metcalfe. I guessed at once that Casement had sent me a copy of his *Life of James Horton*.

As I unfastened the wrappings I was aware of a considerable curiosity, for I knew that Casement had been engaged on this work for the better part of two years and that he had high hopes for it. I stood the book on my desk and looked at it. It was a very handsome volume. It was two inches thick and correspondingly tall and broad. I guessed it would sell for about \$6.00 a copy, and sell very well, too. Casement's books are popular in California.

It was generous of my old friend to make me so substantial a gift, yet I felt no intense gratitude and I was a little annoyed because I could not at once hit on a plausible reason why he had so honored me. Of course I recognized that in casting about for an ulterior motive I might have been doing Casement an injustice. He might merely have been feeling in a generous mood and so have yielded to an impulse to do a kindly act for a fellow writer. It was possible, but I doubted it. Casement has many excellent qualities; he is as widely admired as any literary man in the state, but acts of generosity to other authors are a bit out of his line. Surely, I told myself, he would hardly do a favor to a writer who

cultivated somewhat the same field as he did. That would be expecting too much of human nature.

Casement has been writing so voluminously on California history, and so successfully, and over a period of so many years, that he has come to feel a sort of proprietary interest in the whole subject. It is perhaps an exaggeration to say that he regards the publication of a book on California by someone other than himself as a personal affront, but one often gets that impression. Because of his standing in academic circles and his wide popular following, his services as a reviewer are in demand both by the scholarly journals and the literary weeklies. Casement has reviewed almost every California book of importance, except his own, that has appeared during the past twenty years. His reviews are always models of impartiality. He goes into the subject in detail and with authority. He weighs the book's good and bad qualities, points out errors of fact and interpretation, and tells what field the author has attempted to cover and why he has failed. After reading one of these comprehensive analyses no one ever feels any desire to look into the book itself. Moreover, although Casement invariably finds that the volume under discussion is worthless, his reasons for reaching that conclusion are stated so fairly and with so engaging an air of detachment that no one (except, perhaps, the wretched author) ever thinks of accusing him of bias.

The fact that writers of books on California fail to gain Casement's approval is very largely their own fault. He has ideas on the subject and he has never hesitated to express them. I suppose he has delivered 'The Winning of the Golden Empire' — the most popular of his lectures — at least five hundred times during the past twenty years. If there is a Chamber of Commerce or a Rotary or Lions or Kiwanis club from Redding to El Centro that has not heard that spirited talk it can only be because their managers lacked the enterprise to invite him. I once heard Casement lament the fact that his services as a lecturer were so much in demand, and I don't doubt that his constant traveling up and down the state is a drain on even his abundant energy. But when I asked him why, if lecturing was burdensome, he continued to do it, Casement confessed that he enjoyed it.

'I've never been an armchair historian,' he added, 'and I guess I'm too old to begin now. It's not that I don't envy you fellows who can retire to your studies and come out in a few weeks with a new book under your arm. It's just that I can't work that way — I often wish I could. I can't let myself get detached from my subject. I've got to get out where I can see it and touch it, where I can grapple with it at close quarters. You know what I mean, Walter?'

'No,' I said.

'I suppose it is different with you fiction writers,' he acknowledged. 'You don't have to worry about names or dates or the reliability of sources or the hundred other things that give us historians gray hairs. You invent your tales as you go along, and stir in a bit of love interest and a complication or two and presto! you've got another novel. Another "gripping romance of Old California."'

I was well aware of the source of Casement's grievance against us fiction writers who sometimes use California as the locale of our tales. The fact that

every now and then one of these novels has a mild popularity and outsells his own solid historical works doesn't alter his conviction that all such books are trash. His chief complaint is that their authors haven't a proper knowledge of the periods of which they presume to write. If, in a review of one of these innocuous romances, he finds a historical error (he usually finds more than one) he drags it out and corrects it, citing chapter and verse to prove his point. But his attitude is more often one of sorrow than of anger; no fair-minded reader ever believes there is any rancor behind his judgments. He leaves one with the feeling that he would gladly have said something nice about the book if only its author had done one thing right and so have given him an opportunity to be generous.

Anyone who has listened to Casement's Golden Empire lecture — and who has not? — will recall that telling phrase of his: 'When it comes to history, ladies and gentlemen, I'll take mine straight.' That is a good example of his informal platform manner. He is not afraid to say that something he likes is 'swell' (twenty-five years ago he would have said 'bully') or that something he doesn't like is 'lousy.' That puts his audiences at their ease and, as he says, takes the curse off his academic connection. Than Casement there is not in all California a more striking exemplification of the fact that a college professor can be, in another of his phrases, a good egg.

Of course, Casement's prestige here on the Coast is not based solely on such grounds. He has been writing industriously for a third of a century and he has produced more than a score of books. Besides that, he has held a series of progressively more important jobs at his university, and there are those who think he is in line for even higher honors when old President Van Amberg retires, as he inevitably will soon. Casement has been a leading spirit in the Historical Associa-

tion from its founding, and a director since 1926 of the First National Bank of his home town. And of course everyone recalls his venture into politics a few years ago, when he ran far ahead of his ticket and missed becoming Lieutenant Governor only because of the Democratic landslide that year.

But Casement's reputation is primarily based on his historical writings. Although I feel that his books make heavy going, I must add that this is a personal reaction and that many think otherwise. Besides, my belief that he is a bad writer does not prevent my recognizing that he is an influential one. It is well known that the inability to express oneself lucidly has never prevented a scholar from receiving the homage to which his other talents entitle him. At worst this is looked on as a minor blemish that throws other qualities into relief, like a well-placed mole on the cheek of a beauty.

Casement's theories are not in the least complicated. I am not oversimplifying when I state that his entire professional career has been devoted to furthering the belief that from the early nineteenth century until about the year 1865 every man who entered California from the East Coast underwent a remarkable transformation at the moment he set foot on our soil, and that everyone who came from any other place whatsoever suffered changes equally drastic, but for the worst. The convenience of such a belief is evident. Once Casement had established that point in mind he was relieved from the necessity of ever giving it another thought. In his subsequent writings his heroes and villains fell automatically into their proper categories and thereafter they gave him no further trouble. It is a great boon to a member of any of the learned professions to be able to do all one's thinking at the outset of one's career.

It has done a lot for Casement. While he was still at college he decided what was to be his life's work. He would teach California history and he would

write about California history, and his field should be that period from the coming of the first Yankee until the close of the Civil War. Both his theory and his method are well exemplified in the work that first established his reputation, his two-volume *Conquest of California*, published in 1916. Many thousands of sets have been sold; one sees the stout red volumes on the shelves of every California library that amounts to anything, and I don't doubt that most of their owners have made conscientious attempts to read them. That the *Conquest* is not easy going Casement himself candidly admits. 'You won't find the nuggets lying on the surface,' he tells his students in History B-1, the most popular of his lecture courses. 'You've got to dig for them.' Six generations of college students have heard that warning — Casement never hesitates to make his own books required reading in his courses — and it must be admitted that those who dig industriously enough often feel that they are rewarded.

Those who believe that California was conquered and annexed and settled by a race of idealists who acted on all occasions out of motives of pure benevolence will find in Casement's books much to admire. On the other hand, anyone who suspects that the rough shirts of the Yankee trappers and traders and miners did not invariably conceal hearts of pure gold are likely to regard much of Casement's writings as pernicious nonsense.

II

In the next morning's mail I found a note from Casement.

He was, he stated, asking his publisher to send me a copy of his book, and he hoped that I, who had known the Hortons well, would enjoy glancing through it. He added that he didn't know how well he had done the job, — the old man had been a devilishly difficult subject, — but he had done his best and he knew his friends would look leniently on its

shortcomings. Then followed this paragraph, which I read with particular interest:—

'I'm not afraid of what the public will think, or the critics. I'm reasonably sure, too, of the old-timers who knew Horton, and of Horton's daughter, although it's hard to know what the reaction will be in that quarter. It's not important, really, but if you chance to see Aunt Julie, I hope you'll sound her out. I am sending her a copy too. It will be interesting to have her reaction, don't you think? As I recall, she is always ready to state her opinions, and they are always worth listening to. Please give her my warm regards.'

I was not deceived by this offhand reference to Aunt Julie. Casement is an old hand at writing biography (for years it has been a sort of by-product of his work as a historian) and he must surely have had a wide experience with the granddaughters and nephews and cousins of those of whom he has written. For no one has so large an acquaintance among the descendants of an illustrious figure as the man who has just written his biography. Before his book has been out a month he is likely to have met, either personally, or over the telephone, or through the mail, positively everyone who has any claim to relationship with his subject. And let no one suppose that these strangers look him up in order to congratulate him on the excellence of his characterization, or to thank him for rescuing a forebear from the obscurity into which his memory has fallen (and so enhancing their own importance), or to commend his discretion in soft-pedaling that deal in C. P. & R. bonds, or for failing to mention the lawsuit filed in 1868 by that Marysville waitress. Not at all. They seek him out so that they can set him right on any errors that may have slipped into his narrative, and to chide him for his blindness for failing to get in touch with them before he committed his half-baked notions to print.

But these matters never bother Casement. He really enjoys such visitors and he knows exactly how to handle them. When some tottering grandson of a pioneer looks him up, Casement is seldom at a loss to know how to smooth his ruffled feelings. If the caller charges that Casement has erred in a date or omitted a middle initial, he acknowledges the fault with manly frankness, gratefully thanks his caller for setting him right, and promises to correct the slip in the next printing of the book.

The visitor usually ends by staying to lunch. Afterwards, they walk across the campus together and Casement drops in at the office of the college daily and introduces his new friend all around. The result is often an entertaining story in the next morning's issue, in which Casement's book is praised for its accuracy and general excellence by a descendant of the man about whom it was written. Casement keeps on the best of terms with the staff of the college paper. When he has a chance to throw a story that way he is delighted to do it. But he makes it clear that his only aim is to help the boys get out a lively sheet. If, as often happens, the San Francisco papers pick up and elaborate such stories, Casement is annoyed, but in a perfectly good-natured way. 'It's all right to print such stuff in the *Maroon*,' he says, 'where it's all in the family. But when the outside papers get hold of it, that's another matter. You never know where the thing will end. You may recall that the time the *Maroon* quoted from my lecture on the Vigilance Committee of '56—the part where I drew a rough parallel between conditions then and now—the city papers got my remarks rather badly garbled. What's worse, the news services sent the story all over the country. I got clippings from the most surprising places. The newspapers have got me in a lot of hot water.'

'Why don't you forbid the *Maroon* to quote you?' I asked.

'Well, since that Vigilance business I

make them submit their stories to me before they print them. But one can't shut down on them entirely. It wouldn't be fair to the boys. Many of them are campus correspondents for the state papers and they work on space rates. It's their livelihood.'

'Besides,' I pointed out, 'when they graduate, some of them get jobs on papers up and down the Coast.'

Casement nodded. 'You'd be surprised to know how many of our old *Maroon* boys are working on the state press. Many of them have quite responsible positions. I've kept in touch with most of them. It never hurts a writer to have some friends in the newspaper game.'

'Or a politician?' I suggested.

'I suppose you're referring to that Lieutenant Governor business,' he laughed. 'As a matter of fact the newspaper boys were most helpful. At least they saved me from disgracing myself completely.'

'Well,' I said, 'keep your fences in repair. You never know.'

Casement shook his head. 'No, Walter, I've learned my lesson. I'm a historian, not a politician. When it comes to practical politics I'm a babe in arms.'

III

That Casement was anxious to know what Aunt Julie thought of his biography of her father did not surprise me.

It is hard to explain the position Juliet Horton occupies in San Francisco. Rightly or not, our town has acquired over the years a reputation for tolerance. It is said that anyone who refrains from making a nuisance of himself may be, or say, or do, very much what he pleases. For a long time now it has been the custom to cite the case of Aunt Julie as the most conspicuous example of our collective broad-mindedness. I think there has not been in the past forty years any worthwhile movement for civic betterment launched locally that Aunt Julie has not fought tooth and nail. She has a sharp tongue, an unstable temper, and a pretty

talent for vituperation. The one sure way to get in her good graces is to scold her for being a hard and selfish old woman with no more sense of her duty toward society than a Digger Indian. She boasts that she has led a thoroughly frivolous life and that she has enjoyed every minute of it. She claims to be eighty, but that is a mild exaggeration. I happen to know that she was born in 1863. She is worth about four million dollars.

I have always had a high regard for that reprehensible old lady. On the other hand I have never felt any really warm enthusiasm for her brother Cliff, who was unlike her in all ways. I am not alone in this, and it is hard to explain why. When Cliff Horton died everyone of importance in the city attended his funeral. The officiating clergyman stated that by his death San Francisco had lost its most valuable and generous and public-spirited citizen, and no fair-minded person in the crowded church could possibly have objected. Yet on looking about I failed to see on any of the hundreds of solemn faces an expression that could be said to reflect genuine regret. Who can explain why it is that when we part from the good and the just we are able to keep our emotions under such admirable control, whereas tear-filled eyes and the grief-stricken blowing of noses form an invariable accompaniment to the funerals of scoundrels?

Cliff Horton died about midway in his fifty-ninth year, at half past two o'clock on a Monday afternoon. His passing was unexpected, for he had been in the best of health — the Hortons are a long-lived family — and there was reason to hope that San Francisco would continue to have the benefit of his sound advice and open purse for at least another decade. The cause was acute indigestion brought on, it was said, by overindulgence in California shrimps, a delicacy for which he had long had a weakness. Some professed to see a note of irony in the fact that the career of

this great benefactor of our city had been prematurely terminated by a food so typically San Franciscan as a plate of shrimp Louis. Next day both our morning papers had his picture on their front pages and each devoted a column to an outline of his life and good deeds.

The list of his benefactions was a long one: the James Horton Scholarship Fund for Research in San Francisco History (administered by his friend Dr. Casement); the admirably equipped playground, Horton Field, in the Potrero; the Music Bowl in Golden Gate Park, one of the most charming open-air theatres in the country, attractively placed on a wooded, but chilly, hillside near Stow Lake; the North Beach Boys' Club; the Horton Lecture Fellowship in Sociology at the state university; the Americanization Center in the alley off Grant Avenue (where the elder Horton once owned some highly profitable houses of prostitution); the Clifford Horton Endowment for the Advancement of Industrial Peace, and many others. This was in addition to his membership on the board of practically every charitable and cultural and civic organization in the city. Clifford's life had been one board meeting after another.

A citizen with a finger in so many pies was naturally not permitted to have a perfunctory funeral. His body lay in state all one day in the city hall — an honor usually reserved for defunct politicians — while thousands filed past his bier. In San Francisco there has always been a numerous group who can be depended on to show up at any public function, provided only that it has been prominently mentioned in the newspapers and that admission is free. Both these conditions of course prevailed at Cliff's funeral, and the turnout was remarkable. He would have been gratified had he been permitted to know that so many had personally paid their respects to his memory, but he would also have been ill at ease. He was by nature an austere man with a distaste for display.

He detested crowds and he appeared at public gatherings only when his admirable social sense informed him that he could not properly remain away. He was never at his ease among strangers, particularly among those of the lower orders. His manner then was likely to be so reserved that in some quarters he gained a reputation as a purse-proud snob. This caused him a great deal of regret; he would have liked to be popular in the hearty, back-slapping manner of his friend Casement. Besides, he had a real interest in the problems of those less fortunate than himself and a genuine desire to improve their lot. But he preferred to deal with them at second hand. Like many another philanthropist, he loved the common man as a type and heartily disliked him as an individual. When some recipient of his generosity waylaid him on the street or in the corridor outside his office, Clifford could never quite conceal his distaste for the fellow. He always broke away at the earliest possible moment. Gratitude is one of the most admirable of human virtues and by no means the commonest, and the sentiment is not less beautiful when it is expressed in a breath that smells of garlic and stale wine, by a man whose shirt has been too long away from the tub and whose affably extended hand needs scrubbing. Clifford realized all that. But he was naturally fastidious, and personal untidiness revolted him. He often wished that the deserving were more sanitary.

His will contained a diplomatically worded paragraph concerning Aunt Julie. It stated that through the liberality of their father she already had an income ample for her needs during the remainder of her life. His executors were instructed to permit her to select from his personal belongings any article of furniture, piece of jewelry, or *objet d'art* she might wish as a token of brotherly affection. Aunt Julie, who had hoped for half a million, swallowed her disappointment and, with no hesitation, chose

as her memento Clifford's beautiful little Titian madonna, the only really valuable painting in his mediocre collection.

The long document contained this clause:—

Because I have long felt that the present preëminent position of my beloved city is mainly due to the courage and enterprise of her pioneer citizens, and in order that San Franciscans of this and succeeding generations may have placed before them the inspiration to be found in the career of one of the first of the pioneers, I bequeath the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars for the purpose of having prepared and written and published a suitable life of my father, James Horton, and I direct that the disbursal of this sum be under the exclusive supervision of my friend Dr. Henry Custer Casement.

When the will was published Casement granted an interview, in which he spoke of Clifford's bequest with a good deal of enthusiasm. No city, he stated, has a more inspiring past than San Francisco, and among those who had forged the metropolis none was more worthy of remembrance than James Horton. His story was one that well deserved to be told. By directing that his father's life be written, and by providing so liberally for the work, Clifford had performed not the least notable of his services to the city. Casement made it clear that he would undertake with pleasure the responsibility of seeing that the fund was wisely expended. When he was asked to whom he intended to entrust the writing of the life, he replied that he was keeping an open mind on the point. There were many men and women in California well qualified for the work. It was his aim, however, to find exactly the right person.

As a matter of fact it took Casement almost three years to make up his mind. Meantime he was subjected to a great deal of annoyance. California contains an uncommonly large number of men and women who aspire to literature, and it was not long before the ambition to write a biography of James Horton

was burning in the breasts of practically all of them. Their demands proved a strain even on Casement's good nature, but it must be said that he behaved admirably.

When we chanced to meet one day at the house of a friend (who always invites a few authors to her cocktail parties in the erroneous belief that they tend to brighten the conversation), Casement told me that he was still interviewing applicants.

'I see them all, and I answer all their letters,' he said. 'It's a lot of work but I want to be fair. Most of these people have no qualification for the job and I have to tell them so, but I hope I do it kindly. Few of them have any real interest in Horton. They're thinking mainly of the money.'

I looked sympathetic.

'I try not to be cynical. I tell myself there's always a chance that someone with exactly the right equipment and viewpoint will show up.'

Casement fixed me with a solemn gaze. 'You know, Walter, I'm awfully keen on this matter. I simply can't permit myself to make a mistake.'

My friend's expression of noble determination was a little more than I could stomach. 'Nonsense,' I protested. 'Horton wasn't Napoleon. There must be dozens of fellows who can do a decent life of him.'

'I'm sure you're right. Some first-rate biographical writing is being done on the Coast these days. But my problem's to find the right man.'

'You might have a raffle.'

'I've been trying to follow a somewhat more — ah — scientific method. There are many factors to be considered. It wouldn't be wise to choose a man solely on the basis of his technical competence, although that's important, naturally. But his viewpoint's important, too; his attitude toward Horton and his period. As I see it, no man can write convincingly about the old man unless he has a sympathetic understand-

ing of his environment. Jim Horton was a complex individual. Most of his contemporaries completely misjudged him.'

'So far as my observation goes,' I said, 'most of his contemporaries thought he was a —'

'He wasn't popular in many quarters,' Casement admitted, 'and it was his own fault. He cared little for public opinion. His methods were direct. He was no diplomat. But he got things done. You'll have to grant that he helped immensely to build up the city. I want a man who not only recognizes that but who will give it the importance it deserves.'

'I take it you're not looking for a muckraker.'

'Certainly not. On the other hand we shouldn't try to whitewash the old man. We must strike a balance. I want someone who'll put the emphasis where it belongs: on Horton's really great services to the city and state. To do that properly, some of the less attractive phases of his character will have to be minimized, certain imperfections overlooked.'

'For ten thousand dollars,' I observed, 'a writer will overlook a great many imperfections.'

'That will occur to many people. I've foreseen that danger. In a way it's too bad Cliff was so liberal. The fact that so much money is involved only confuses the issue.'

'Why don't you have a whirl at it yourself?'

Casement looked startled. 'What's that you say?'

'Why don't you write the old man's life yourself?'

Casement shook his head decisively. 'No, Walter, that's out, definitely. I'll admit I've thought about it, but I've put the idea aside. I'm not competent.'

'Nonsense. You're just being modest. No one can hold a candle to you in that field. You're the logical man.'

Casement gave me a pained smile. 'That's nice of you, Walter. Of course

it's true that I've some familiarity with the period. And I know the way the thing should be slanted, if you understand what I mean. But damn it all, a man can't appoint himself to a ten-thousand-dollar job. There'd be a terrific row.'

'Why worry about that? You're expected to find the most competent man, aren't you?'

'Decidedly.'

'Well, who's better qualified than you are?'

There are times when Casement overcomes his natural modesty, and this was one of them. 'I can't think of anyone,' he admitted.

'Then appoint yourself. You can't honestly do anything else.'

He looked at me hard. 'I can't do it, Walter,' he said. 'I haven't got the moral courage.'

But it presently grew clear that Casement's moral courage was stronger than he thought. Not many weeks later, the papers announced that the uncertainty as to who would be James Horton's biographer was at an end: Dr. Casement himself would do the job. In his statement, Casement made it clear that he was shouldering the task reluctantly. He was all too conscious of his limitations; to do full justice to the subject required an abler pen than his. But he would do his best and he hoped the public would look charitably on the book's shortcomings.

His statement made an excellent impression. It was a straight-from-the-shoulder talk by a man who had faced a difficult problem and had solved it according to the dictates of his conscience. To be sure, a few of the town's writers professed to be disappointed. There was bitterness and some profanity in the sordid dens where the literati forgathered. But their abuse was perfunctory and not ill-natured. Not one of them had seriously believed that Casement would let that ten thousand slip through his fingers.

DECLARATION OF A YOUNGER POET

BY GEORGE ALLEN

THE vehemence of our poetry was muffled
All through the Babylonian years when idlers
Required a song of us, and for our strumming
Hung musical boxes on the willow trees,
Crying 'give us a song, the song we dream of!'

What music we made was little and sadly heard
And seldom called for hearing, murmuring
Within our private selves, or if profounder
Then grating to hear, a sound of scrannel pipes,
Our own heart's jarring cracked, and exactly proclaiming
Man the political animal at his discord,
And some sang politics but did not sing.

Yet neither worse nor better than our people
We came by many a passage this way bound,
Each finding in his heart one fear, one music,
All asking question this way and that for courage.
My fear was on the willow trees of Hamburg,
Regarding the first long winter of Hitler's strength
Rising in animal glory, a sheen on the fur.
Men's faces were changed; I knew loathing to know
That battle was joined, beyond my power to escape.
And as the waste land altered into jungle,
We altered with it, poem joined with poem,
Heart joined with heart against the absolute danger,
Fighting content to take a common chance
As we now fight, and sing when there is time.

Our song is hard, biting as deep as danger,
Facing the proud unhurried fact of evil,
Here in the middle of our own heart's battle;
For hard the job we have tackled, holding on
With little breath for singing; but in the night
Watching the stars and searchlights on your beat,
If night is quiet and innocent of guns,
Then you shall have good song, if time to listen.
And holding so, glad if we stand our ground.
Without the loss of love, we not much fear.
If I am overcome, let me be silenced,
It will not matter: like the man at Maldon

Against the Vikings, let me cry who fail
'Mood higher as might lessens'; such a song
Will live, others will give it voice enough.
If we survive, then as our might and main
Get stronger, these our voices shall louder cry
With a new note and a more confident joy.

POET, NEW STYLE

BY LEONARD BACON

SECRET our ritual,
Lonely our road.
Who fathoms our habitual
Rhythm and code?

Who by what art shall pierce
To the heart of our enigma?
Feel in his hands our fierce
And novel stigma?

Before the Gods we burn
On solitary pyres,
So far that few discern,
So dim that none desires.

We have left the day,
Yet fear the night.
Clearness has fled away,
Sense dropped from sight.

It is strange bronze we smelt.
Wild metal was alloyed
By spectral heat we felt
Vibrating through the void.

Our pleasure and distress
Mean nothing in the street.
If we know the emptiness,
So too we know the heat

Across the abysm stealing,
Piercing us through and through,
Invisible, revealing
As lightnings Homer knew.

THE INVASION OF AUSTRALIA

BY H. DUNCAN HALL

I

'THE sea-walls crack.'

The invasion of Australia began on January 23, 1942, with the occupation of Rabaul and the attacks on New Guinea. Smashing through the barriers of the British and American navies, Japan cut across the northern sea and air routes and stabbed down the ocean channels east of New Guinea into the Coral Sea, and west of it past the Moluccas to Darwin. The rain of bombs dropped on Darwin on February 19 brought war at last to the only continent that had never known it. The cloud that rose forty years ago on the horizon of young Australians burst with all the fury of a typhoon out of the China Sea.

The key pass to the Blue Mountains, the one way from Sydney over the Great Divide to the Western Plains, which the baffled explorers had found after twenty years of searching, ran up the ridge on which our old home was built. 'When the Japs come,' our father explained, 'this ridge is the first great line of defense, if they break through at Sydney.' Then he quoted to us some prophetic lines written years before by Henry Lawson, the Australian poet: —

There are boys out there by the western creeks
who hurry away from school
To climb the sides of the breezy peaks or dive in
the shaded pool,
Who'll stick to their guns when the mountains
quake to the tread of a mighty war . . .
When the peaks are scarred and the sea-walls
crack till the furthest hills vibrate.

So our game as boys was defending the ridge against the Japanese Army. We

were confident that our bushcraft and knowledge of every inch of the bush for miles round would outwit them. But if by chance we had to retire before superior forces, then we had a refuge prepared deep in the fastnesses of the Blue Mountains, in a volcanic crater that we had discovered — really discovered, since it was quite unknown to the Government map makers. We had some tools — including an axe and a spade — hidden there in a cave. From our crater fastness we would make forays on the enemy, and even come back twelve miles through the trackless bush by night to the house to get fresh stores and tools. In our innocence we never thought of 'scorched earth.' It would have been unthinkable to put the torch to the old home, which we had seen built from the timber cut in the bush and had so often helped to save from the bush fires raging down the mountainside.

All this was in the first decade of Australian nationhood, from about 1900 onwards. We shared the curious, impalpable, persistent feeling of uneasiness about Japan. Australians with the instinct of frontiersmen had caught a faint something, a fleeting menace, from the actions and language of Japan. Japan had beaten the Chinese Empire; she was about to beat the Russian Empire. Japanese diplomats had expressed 'high dissatisfaction' over the White Australia policy, which was likely, they said, to be to the 'detriment of friendly and commercial relations between Japan and

Australia'; in fact it saved Australia from a Japanese fifth column. For a whole generation relations with Japan were to be the subject of whispered talk and the sport of rumor 'painted full of tongues': hidden friction during the Great War; diplomatic incidents at the Paris Peace Conference; the silent battle between patrol boats and Japanese pearling luggers poaching, taking soundings, and spying on the Great Barrier Reef and the far northern beaches; a Japanese fleet off Rabaul in the sanctions crisis of 1936 — the inner meaning of every word and gesture that pointed to the opening of Japan's long-expected drive south towards Australia's northern sea-walls. When at long last the typhoon broke on December 7 there was almost a sense of relief in Australia. Everything was at stake, but the fight was on in the open. And there was no longer any need to whisper.

II

The invasion has begun. The only questions are how far and how fast it will be pushed, the capacity of Australia to hold out till aid arrives, and whether the United Nations will succeed in keeping the Australian Base or have it turned against them by the Axis.

The Australian Government was prepared to admit that Mr. Churchill might be right in his guess that the Japanese would be too preoccupied in taking, holding, and looting the Indies and Malaya to undertake 'a serious mass invasion of Australia.' But it was aware, as no doubt he was, that such an invasion was clearly within the logic of the Japanese military plans. The advantages to Japan of a successful invasion were so obvious that, as the Australian Army Minister, Mr. Forde, put it, the Government had 'to assume most gravely that an attempt will be made . . . though it is true,' he went on, 'that time, distance, and physical possibilities limit the strategic employment of Japan's armed forces.'

Australia has a clear view of the meaning of time, distance, and physical possibilities. She knows that the war is one and indivisible; has she not, alone of the United Nations except Britain and the United States, troops and airmen fighting on four continents? The General Staff has taken fully into account the probability that the high goal of the Axis is to encircle the World Island by joining hands in India — Hitler storming the western gates by breaking through to the Persian Gulf and Iran, and Japan storming the eastern gates through Burma. Mr. Curtin, the Prime Minister, has many times shown how much he counts upon the inevitable Russian attack on Japan's vital inner flank. Australians count upon Japan breaking some of her teeth on Singapore and Java. They know that the man power of the Japanese Army, spread out from Manchuria to New Guinea, is not unlimited, and that every fresh territory conquered pins down a fresh holding force. They do not forget even the insidious drain on the Japanese Army of malaria in Malaya, Borneo, and Burma. They allow for the steady attrition of Japanese ships and planes. But they see with extreme clearness that Japan cannot rest content with holding the line of Malaya, the Indies, New Guinea, and New Caledonia. If she has the time and the strength she must go farther and destroy the great base of Australia. Because if she does not achieve this strategic objective, the United Nations will surely prepare there her doom. They knew it before Mr. Churchill told them on January 27: 'And then, later on, from great basic areas in Australia . . . we shall be able to set about our tasks in good style in 1943.'

But the base can only be used in 1943 if it is fully secured now. If immense forces are not poured into it immediately, and the task of organizing it, as the principal basic area for the attack on Japan, is not begun at once, we may find there only a beleaguered garrison, who have

had to burn much of their own factories and arsenals, and vast stores of food and raw materials.

It is a grim race against time, between the speed of the Japanese drive south and the convoys of merchant vessels moving at only half the speed of ocean liners over the vast distances of the Pacific, and of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The time between loading a fighting plane at Liverpool and assembling it ready to fly, 12,000 miles away on the great military flying field at Richmond behind Sydney, is about ten weeks; from San Francisco it is at least eight weeks. Each convoy can take only a small number of planes, tanks, and men, and each ship can make only about three voyages a year. Because of the desperate limitation on the number of ships available, it is not a matter of just one anxious period of eight or ten weeks, but of at least several such periods, stretching out for four, six, eight months. For every voyage it takes to Sydney or Singapore, each ship withdrawn from the Atlantic loses four or five cargoes from Boston to Liverpool. A convoy of twenty ships to Sydney means the loss of eighty or a hundred cargoes across the Atlantic.

But if Britain and America have their anxiety as to whether they can make it in the time, so has Japan. The fact that Japan, through surprise and careful preparation, was able to advance to Singapore and Amboina in the first two months of the war is no final measure of the progress of her drive in the next two, or four, or six months.

An invasion of Australia is a continental affair. Japan has learned in China that the invasion of a continental land mass involves endless attrition on long lines of communication. Darwin is over 2000 miles beyond Singapore, and from Darwin to Sydney is far more than the breadth of the Atlantic — 2800 miles by sea and 3000 miles by road and rail. Australia has natural defense in depth — depth of desert and sea spaces. The vital

centres of population and industry are tucked away on the far east and south-east coasts. Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide hold about half the population of the country. An invasion to be successful must result in the capture or destruction of these centres.

But a hostile Japanese fleet venturing into these far waters would run the double risk of heavy attack from land-based planes and of meeting American naval units based on Sydney and Auckland since early in February after having secured and garrisoned a chain of island bases stretching back to Pearl Harbor. As Winston Churchill revealed on January 27: 'The eastward approaches to Australia and New Zealand have been called the Anzac area and are under United States command' and responsibility. A slow-moving Japanese fleet convoying the great fleet of transports necessary for a real invasion by a land army, and far away from its bases, would be exactly the target dreamed of by the American Navy. Even a fleet coming down from New Guinea, from the harbor (not naval bases) of Rabaul or Port Moresby, would have to venture far beyond the protection of any planes operating from the score of good airfields that exist in the New Guinea area. It would have to travel 1200 miles down the outside of the Great Barrier Reef before it could approach the Queensland coast at Rockhampton. The Barrier is true to its name. As intricate and dangerous to navigation as any sea in the world, and with every opening mined, it is safe water for American and Australian ships, but for an invading fleet a veritable Strait of Macassar flanked by airdromes.

A land invasion is easy enough. Almost anywhere along two or three thousand miles of open and unprotected coastline of Northern and Western Australia, a Japanese fleet in command of the sea could land an army without great risk. But at most points the army would have nowhere to go; it could per-

ish of thirst trying to cross at least a thousand miles of roadless and waterless desert that has swallowed up other parties of explorers. With the doubtful exception of the country at the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria, there is only one point at which an invader from the north would have much hope of success, and that is at Darwin, the head of the only transcontinental road and a strategic point of great importance for the defense of Australia.

The occupation of the uncompleted naval base and airdrome at Darwin would remove a standing menace to Japanese power in the Indies, since it is from Darwin that the counterattack of the United Nations by air and sea would be launched. Darwin is defended by heavy artillery, by a powerful garrison assembled there in April 1941 as a result of the biggest troop movement in the history of Australia, and by a certain number of bombers and fighters based on a new military airdrome, and perhaps housed in the underground hangars that were planned before the war. From Darwin the coast is patrolled by land bombers and flying boats as far east as Thursday Island, southwest down to Wyndham, and in a wide circle out over the sea to the north and westward over the Indian Ocean. It is protected against surprise attack by a radio-location system. Bombers and fighters can be flown to it in a few hours along four or five separate chains of bases from all points in Australia. But it might be outflanked by a powerful force landed on remote beaches; and it is 3000 miles from its chief sources of supply in the far south.

It was to meet just such a threat that the new all-weather military road, 600 miles long, was rushed through, late in 1940, to connect the two railheads and so link Darwin with the South. It was begun in October 1940 (a few days after Japan had shown her hand by joining up with the Axis) and finished in 93 days. Gangs of workmen on day and night shifts, working in the desert with arc

lamps, pushed it forward at the rate of over six miles a day from the railhead at Alice Springs in the centre of Australia to the railhead at Birdum in the Northern Territory. The railways which the new road connects are both 3' 6" gauge. The northern section of the railway is 300 miles long and the southern 700. The route follows the overland telegraph line erected in 1872 which has just been doubled the whole length of its 2000 miles to give a trunk telephone connection. This wire has been cut on numberless occasions by men dying from thirst who staked their last chance on the repair gang getting to the break in time. No repair gang would come to a Japanese army that ran out of water somewhere along the nearly 2000 miles of almost arid country they would have to cross before they could arrive at even a town, let alone a vital centre. Bombers operating from Darwin at their extreme range of 1200 miles would find only desert beneath them, except for a few small towns in the northern corner of Queensland.

Two thousand miles of natural scorched earth — sun-scorched gibber plains, red sand, tufts of white bleached grass, scattered trees with the sun blazing through their thin leaves. Along the route of an invading army, waterholes, tanks for watering sheep, and artesian bores near the route would be destroyed. There would be not a gallon of gasoline for engines or for tanks grinding their way through the desert. The railways could not be used as they were in Malaya, unless the army brought its own rolling stock with it. The troops could not live off the country as they did in Malaya. Their lines of communication would be under constant attack by troops perhaps without their equal in the world as experts in desert warfare. There would not be the slightest shelter from the ceaseless attack of bombing planes. This desert is no place for infiltration tactics. Raiding parties striking out from the main route would take

their lives in their hands, haunted by thirst in a land of a few inches of rainfall a year and a hundred inches of evaporation which dries up all but the deepest waterholes. A fence that seems to promise a lead to water may be followed for a hundred miles without sight of a waterhole or a sheep station. Every sheep or cattle station has a radiotelephone transceiver, operated by bicycle pedal, to flash news of a raiding party to the nearest air-drome.

Invasion by land forces from the north or northwest is possible, but the transport difficulties under war conditions would be staggering, as Libya shows. But the distances involved are many times those of Libya, and they are inland distances far from the sea. Invasion by air over such distances is hardly practicable unless it can be followed up simultaneously by land armies — as the German failure in Syria and Iraq showed.

III

But the Australian General Staff is in no danger of underestimating the magnitude of the task of defending a continent with twelve thousand miles of coastline and a population of seven millions. It has had no illusion that the continent can be held indefinitely without aid from outside against a great power able to attack at leisure with all its resources. But its plans were made on the assumption that the British Navy would not be able to come to the rescue in the early stages of a war, and that Australia must be able to hold out against an attack in force by an invader having command of the sea and able to land armed forces on many parts of the vast coastline.

The principal ports are defended by heavy guns able to beat off a direct attack from the sea. But bombardment from the sea and bombers from aircraft carriers might inflict heavy damage on vital points on the seacoast like the naval base and workshops at Sydney, and the steel mills at Newcastle and Kiama,

north and south of Sydney. The Australian Field Army, as planned before the war, was to be 200,000 strong when on a war footing. It was planned, as the Defense Minister put it, to force the enemy to come with such large convoys that he would be highly vulnerable to air attack when nearing the coast, in any part of the more closely settled area from Brisbane to Melbourne or Adelaide.

Despite the fact that the total armed forces sent abroad (Army, Navy, and Air Force) were known to be from 170,000 to 250,000 men, the armed forces available in Australia at the beginning of the year numbered 250,000 men. In addition there was a home guard of 50,000 tough veterans from the last war. Moreover, since Japan struck there has been something in the nature of a general mobilization, a *levée en masse* of all the available man power in the country, for service in the Army or in the defense industry. A volunteer Defense Corps for all men from 18 to 60 was formed. The total number of males in these age groups was put in the census of 1933 as 1,926,000. As Lord Kitchener once pointed out, a great deal of the training that in the ordinary course would have to be supplied to obtain an efficient soldier 'is already a part of the daily life of the Australian.' Out of such material, with intense training, a much larger armed force can be raised in a comparatively short time — if time is available. But in the process war industry, which already in 1941 absorbed 210,000 men, would be likely to suffer.

It is not very profitable to compare this Australian Army with the forces — in all not much more than 100,000 — that opposed Japan in Malaya and in the Philippines. Because, as the Senior Officer's Report on National Defense after the Great War pointed out, 'a considerable dispersal of troops is inevitable,' owing to the great extent of the Australian coastline and the transport facilities. The Army Minister announced in January that the Army was 'divided into two great military commands,' one

for Western Australia and the other for the five eastern states.

The factor of mobility depends on the road and railway system and the aviation facilities. A Rail and Road Coördination Authority was set up in June 1941 to coördinate the five separate road and rail systems in the five mainland states. The road system has been revolutionized since the Great War, giving the Army a far greater degree of mobility. But it is inevitably far below the level in the United States. The immensity of the great distances has to be remembered. Sydney to Darwin, Brisbane to Perth, are each far more than the breadth of the Atlantic. Adelaide is as far from Perth (with which it is connected by air and rail, but not by road) as London is from Istanbul.

The railway system, for a population no greater than that of New York City, reaches the extraordinary figure of 27,973 miles of track. It is run by the States and the Commonwealth with a high degree of efficiency. The strain on the main trunk lines has been somewhat eased by the building of parallel and connecting lines of strategic importance behind the Dividing Range. But the system is cursed by a difference of gauges, which, despite the recommendation of the War Railway Council in 1911 and endless reports and discussions since, still remains as a grave menace to the security of the country in time of war. Moreover, with an enemy fleet off the coast much of the heavy tonnage carried by the interstate shipping fleet would be thrown upon the railways. But these difficulties can perhaps be exaggerated. In a real invasion crisis the roads and railways could probably carry the extreme burden placed upon them.

Air transport has been developed to a higher point in Australia than in any other country in the world with anything like the same population. The country is ideal for flying and the population is air-minded. Before the war there were 257 government airdromes

and emergency landing fields, as well as 230 licensed public airdromes; and the system has been greatly expanded during the war. Workshop units for aircraft maintenance are being set up in areas as widely separated as possible, with central factory repair establishments in Sydney and Melbourne. The whole continent is circled by airdromes as well as crossed in three or four directions by well-organized air routes.

Data regarding the size of the Air Force are not available. A number of squadrons are stationed abroad. Reinforcements from Britain and the United States have arrived and are still arriving. The force was composed largely of Australian-built Beaufort bombers and Wirraway general-purpose machines, of British bombers and fighters, and of a certain number of American bombers. Eighty-six Lockheed Hudsons had been received by April 1940, and a number of American bombers have been flown across the Pacific since that date. A thousand airplanes of Australian manufacture were in the air last October. The production rate is about 200 a month and still mounting. It was decided early in February to stop the manufacture of trainers and to concentrate wholly on the manufacture of bombers and fighters. A new type of bomber, in addition to the Bristol Beaufort, is going into production. The Royal Australian Air Force, part of which is abroad, now comprises 70,000 pilots, air gunners, and observers.

The main equipment of the Field Army consists of light tanks, Bren-gun carriers, a heavier armored vehicle, light artillery, with some batteries of heavy guns, anti-tank guns and anti-aircraft guns. How much equipment is in the country and how much abroad is a military secret. But it is probable that the Army is still lightly armed, compared with the armaments so far available to the Japanese expeditionary forces.

No country that Japan has invaded in the ten years of her aggression had a munitions industry remotely comparable

to that of Australia. Since the last war, and above all since the present war began, Australia has gone through a technological revolution. The number of those employed in war industry, which was less than 5000 at the outbreak of the war, was already over 200,000 last summer. Steps have been taken to close down industries not vital to the war effort and to transfer the labor into war industry. The regulations adopted on February 19, the day the Japanese bombed Darwin, involved complete regimentation of the whole man power of the country, and have greatly speeded up the plan to transfer in 1942 another 160,000 men from civil to war industry.

Great munitions plants have been established. There are fifty firms manufacturing machine tools where there were two small firms in 1939. These munitions factories are turning out (in some cases in sufficient quantities for export) airplanes, Bren guns and carriers, light tanks and armored vehicles, light and heavy artillery, anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns and predictors, naval guns, optical instruments of military importance, shells of all sizes, explosives, bombs, torpedoes and mines, and a great variety of other equipment. A chain of small arms factories has been established at strategic points. Sixty or seventy million rounds of Australian small arms ammunition were sent to England in 1940 for use by the British Hurricanes and Spitfires in the Battle of Britain. Fifty small naval vessels, including destroyers and at least one cruiser, are being built. Sixty merchant vessels of 9200 tons each and powered with Australian-manufactured marine engines are being constructed over a five-year period.

Much of this industry is new to the country. Australia manufactured airplanes before she began the manufacture of automobiles. There has been at the same time a great expansion in mining and metallurgical production. The manufacture of aluminum has begun. The steel output has doubled and is now

about two million tons annually. In addition to blast furnaces and steel mills at Newcastle, Kiama, and Lithgow in New South Wales, blast furnaces have been erected at Iron Knob in South Australia, so that the ships carrying iron ore from there to Newcastle can return with cargoes of coal for the new smelters.

IV

The great importance of Australia to the United Nations as a strategic base, a reservoir of highly trained man power, an arsenal of munitions and a storehouse of supplies, thus becomes clear. Even its armed forces exceed those of all the governments in exile and the Netherlands Indies combined. It is making a very important contribution, through the Eastern Group Supply Council and Central Provision Office in Delhi, to the needs of all the countries supplied through these bodies, especially India, New Zealand, and the Netherlands Indies. One recent order filled by Australian factories for the Eastern Group Supply included 3,000,000 blankets, 7,200,000 pieces of underclothing, 3,000,000 pullovers and jackets, 1,000,000 pairs of boots, 7,000,000 pairs of socks, 400,000 uniforms, and 250,000 overcoats. The billion pounds of wool produced annually by Australian sheep give the armies of the democracies an advantage over the less well clad armies of the Axis. Under an agreement with Britain in 1941 heavy stocks of storable foodstuffs have been accumulated in the country as a reserve to be drawn on when shipping conditions permit, or for use after the war.

Australia has all the metals and other raw materials necessary for arms manufacture except nickel, which is obtained in near-by New Caledonia. She even supplied 400,000 tons of steel to Britain in an early stage of the war. Her reserves of high-grade coal exceed those of the whole of the rest of the Southern Hemisphere. The one great strategic

weakness is lack of oil. Up to 1939, thirty years of searching and drilling produced hardly enough to fill a large tanker. In the ominous words of the Commonwealth Year Book, 'natural oil does not exist in Australia.' But large reserves, some in underground storage, have been accumulated and oil is now being distilled from shale.

The stage of industrial production already reached, the self-sufficiency of the country in the matter of raw materials, and the entry of the United States into the war open up an important new possibility. The acute shipping problem of the United Nations, which is more likely than any other single factor to prolong or possibly lose them the war, can be relieved somewhat by carrying further the decentralization of war industry which the British Commonwealth adopted as a policy at the Imperial Conference of 1937. A small convoy of ships with American machine-tools and workmen would make it possible to set up in Australia large plants, using local raw materials, for the manufacture of tanks and fighting planes for the use of the Australian, British, and American armed forces based on Australia.

This is the prize for which Britain and America race Japan. It must not be assumed, from the sharp appeals for aid from Britain and America by the new Labor Government in Canberra, that London and Washington are not fully aware of the magnitude of the stake in Australia. As the Australian War Minister himself has said: 'Many great movements' of armed forces are secretly being carried out by the United Nations, and 'Australia may yet become the principal offensive base from which the Allies will embark upon the reconquest of Asia and the Pacific.' American naval units and some American troops and supplies have arrived. The British Navy is not idle in the Indian Ocean. This is the bright side of the picture.

The other side is black. Even by cutting Australia off from the sea, without

invasion, Japan can rob the Allies of one of their greatest arsenals, of vast stocks of essential foodstuffs and raw materials such as wool, of a powerful army of shock troops, and of an annual contingent of 20,000 air pilots, gunners, and observers. An invasion, striking at the principal cities, could turn the productive part of Australia into scorched earth. And finally, the occupation of Australia by the Axis would mean loss of Allied Command of the sea in the Indian Ocean as well as in the Pacific, and the breakdown of the blockade of the Axis. The Allies themselves would be cut off from the supplies from the whole of Eastern Asia and Oceania, as they are now cut off from Europe.

The prize to be won in Australia is great; but the penalty for losing it is far greater. It means the loss of the last base for the recovery of Oceania and the beating of the Japanese back into their islands. Australia is the southern anchor of the United Nations. By taking it Japan would build a dividing fence right across the globe from the Kuriles to Tasmania. The conquest for the first time in history of one of the English-speaking nations would be a most serious blow to the prestige of those left. The Australian Government believes that full-scale invasion will be attempted by states, beginning first perhaps with Darwin, Port Moresby in Papua, and the seizing of Thursday Island and air bases in North Queensland. The destruction of the large oil fuel stores at Darwin (which is a naval oil refueling and not a refitting base since it lacks docks) would be a strategic objective of the first importance, because these stores are probably irreplaceable. After that no man can say. Australia has fought Japan in Malaya and Java. Her armies of upwards of 200,000 fighting the Axis abroad are not being brought back. More were rushed to Singapore, and more to Java. The cracking of its sea-walls has not daunted Australia's offensive spirit but has brought it to white heat.

WHERE ARE THE NOVELISTS?

BY HOWARD SPRING

I

AN article appeared recently in the *Western Mail* asking, 'Where are the Novelists?' and reproaching writers because they are not finding in this war matter for their pens. It is not true that no novels are coming out of the war. They are coming abundantly, but none has come that does more than tickle the surface and appearance of things. None has come that is significant, none that does more than the daily record of journalists can do as well. I have my opinion as to why this is, and I sent this letter to the editor of the *Western Mail*: —

'My attention has just been called to your interesting leading article "Where are the Novelists?" Let us consider the general question of the novelist's and poet's job in wartime.

'The poet first. You quote some beautiful lines from Binyon and Rupert Brooke. These are concerned respectively with the consolations survivors lay to their hearts and with the finer aspirations of the soldier-patriot: the aspirations that take men into battle.

'But these were not the significant poems of the war. As the war went on the significant poetry began to flow from the pens of the men in the thick of it: Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, to name but two. To me, three words by Wilfred Owen are poetry's greatest contribution to all that concerns the last war: "death's extreme decrepitude." All the ghastly landscapes of Passchendaele and the Somme are summed up there —

in the silence of night when the fighting is over.

'It was something new for English poets so liberally to express themselves instead of leaving their experience and emotions to be expressed in a more or less bogus fashion by laureates, and it was inevitable, as the war dragged on, that the enchantment of Rupert Brooke should dissolve into the disenchantment of Wilfred Owen. . . . As the emotional content of the war changed and a great unescapable "Why?" hung over all thinking men's minds, there was no longer any room for the poetry of exultation.

'We have had no poetry of exultation thus far in the present war, and that is because we have come upon it with that "Why?" still heavy in men's hearts. Any meaningful poetry that we get out of this war will come later, and I think it will have an even more bitter taste than Sassoon's and Owen's. . . .

'Your writer refers to *Sonia* and *Mr. Britling* as good examples of the last war's fiction — and they are good enough, though not, I think, notable or durable. The trouble is that Mr. Britling this time is not only seeing it through, he is also seeing through it, and in time he will give us the result of his seeing. Don't try to hurry the novelist. His is a longer and more reflective job than the lyric poet's. He has to digest both facts and the implications of facts. Before he is able to do anything effective he will have to be able to see a little further round the corner of time than is possible

at present. Remember that the important novels (and plays) of the last war were written *after* the war. Remember that Tolstoy was in the Crimea in 1854 and began to write *War and Peace* in 1864.

'You will get no good poetry or fiction by trying to hurry up the poets and novelists. I remember an amusing incident in the last war. A well-known artist had been given permission to come to the Somme front to paint pictures. He remained for a long time apparently doing nothing (though I can well imagine that his heart and mind were doing a great deal). Impatience about this inactivity caused a general to break out vehemently one day, "Tell him to do *something*. Tell him to draw a horse."

'It's no good telling the novelists to do *something*. If they don't want to waste their time drawing pretty pictures of horses that's their affair. Believe me, their pictures will come, but I should be the last to expect them, when they come, to be pretty pictures.'

II

If this were an autobiography, there would be much to say about my three and a half years in the B. E. F., about the stately rise of a private to the rank of Warrant Officer Second Class, and about that teeming warren of activity, G. H. Q., France. I never saw the statue of Haig that they put up in Montreuil-sur-Mer, that sweet township of the Pas de Calais where G. H. Q. was situated behind the ramparts on the hill above the green swiftly flowing Canche. The Germans are there now, and perhaps they have done away with the statue, which, anyway, would look a reproachful object to the local French, who so often saw, as I did, the field marshal ride out through the *octroi* barrier, one with his horse like a centaur, a posse of lancers behind him, with their pennons undulant and whickering in the winter air, towards his chateau outside the town.

A few bright memories survive from those weary years, and most of them are of persons. Taking it all in all, we were lucky in our officers, though there was a sprinkling of nameless swine. I remember John Buchan, a cavalier if ever there was one, always commanding our respect but never forgetting how to unbend. It is a mystery to me how he got through the days as he did. He was doing his work as an Intelligence officer; he was writing his history of the war; and he was somehow fitting in novels as well. For a little time, at Beauquesne, he was unwell, and a sergeant had to call on him in his billet. He found Buchan lying in bed, unable even then to rest, the pages of *Greenmantle* strewn the blankets. Buchan went home on leave towards the end of that year, and told the sergeant he would like to bring him back a Christmas present. I never knew another officer give an 'other rank' a Christmas present, but this was typical of Buchan's warm human personality. The sergeant had the sense to say flatteringly that he would like an autographed copy of *Greenmantle*, a reply which suggests an aptitude for the diplomatic service.

G. S. Duncan, Haig's chaplain, introduced me to John Drinkwater, who had come out to read poetry to the troops. *Abraham Lincoln* had not then been written. Drinkwater was unknown save as a man connected with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre who had published a few thin volumes of lyrics. I remember that a high-up staff officer who would have to meet Drinkwater asked me who he was and what he had done.

Drinkwater was born seven years before me, so that at that time he would be in his early thirties. I remember him as a burly clean-shaven young man with thick abundant dark hair, very friendly and unassuming, dressed in a vaguely military khaki uniform. He was very pleased with the success of his mission, which was simply to read poetry wherever men would listen. They listened everywhere. I had plenty of evidence in

Montreuil of the success of that astonishing experiment. Men filled the rooms where he read, and listened breathless — men of every rank, commissioned and non-commissioned, and of every sort, down even to those one would have considered hopeless 'toughs.' It was a remarkable demonstration of the appeal of pure poetry, and it confirmed my own belief that the way to commend poetry to those who think they do not like it, or who imagine even that there is something gutless and effeminate in it, is simply to read it to them. Granted, that is, that the reader knows his job.

I often think of those occasions when I hear of 'Garrison Theatre' and what it considers 'the stuff to give the troops' today. What was in the air of those times? No very great poetry was being produced; but an enormous amount of it was appearing and being read. For myself, the impulse to write verse slowly faded out when the war was over. I did not meet Drinkwater again for many years. He was then silver-haired and broad and episcopal, living stylishly in a big house at Highgate. He asked me how the poetry was getting along, and I told him I had written nothing for years. 'Poetry is still for me,' he said, 'the most exciting thing in life.'

That, I think, was the secret of his readings; that was what he communicated to us. For an hour or two we were lifted above boredom and the gray tedium of our days; the most exciting thing in his life flowed over and was communicated to ours.

The reception which Drinkwater had in France threw some light, in my own mind, on the enthusiasm which once flowed between poets and their public: an enthusiasm which is seen no more because a poet is no longer a *representative* man, touching and ennobling common chords. No poetry is 'successful' today except poetry which is successful with a coterie, and clearly writers of this poetry can never stand in such a relation to the public as that which used to bring

marching processions of students to hail Hans Andersen, and crowds of the devout to listen to Charles Dickens. It is impossible to imagine torches and banners going out above a host intent on honorably besieging the home of Mr. T. S. Eliot. *Communication* has somehow failed between the poets and the people.

The blame for this must fall half on one side and half on the other. There is a very real sense in which this English people is worse educated than when it was illiterate. We pride ourselves on there being no illiterates. We say that everyone can now read, and, insofar as to have the ability to con a sequence of words is to be able to read, the claim has some foundation. We say that everyone can now write, and that again is true if writing is forming letters with a pen. But the quality of what is read and written by the common run of people has declined in the last half century. I think the truth is that when reading and writing were accomplishments not so easy to come by they were for that reason the more highly prized and were exercised upon loftier subjects. A man who could read, read the best so far as he could lay hands upon it; and, reading the best, he was not likely in his writing to be satisfied with the worst. When reading became an accomplishment which every man must have, whether he wanted it or not, there sprang up and multiplied enormously cheap and nasty means for the exercise of these new talents. The ability to read was exploited rather than nurtured and led along the most satisfying lines. It is not surprising that so readily accessible a mass of cheap and common food has caused the public palate to deteriorate. The flavor of poetry, in particular, was too delicate and subtle for a taste gone astray, and poets came to be looked upon, not as representative men with a communication to make that was vital to everybody, but as beings dedicated to a dalliance that was altogether outside of common life and unconnected with it.

III

I am often called a Manchester man, a Manchester novelist; but I am nothing of the sort. I was thirty years old when I went back to the city in 1919, and before that I had lived there for only a few months. After the war, I remained in the city for eleven years before leaving it forever. If that makes me a Manchester man, I am one. I like the ascription. I should not mind if it were true. It certainly is true that Manchester entered more deeply into my blood and bones than any other place I have lived in. To Manchester I took my young wife; in Manchester my sons were born and were brought up till they went away to school; in Manchester I found much happiness.

Southern people think I am joking when I say that I was happy in Manchester, that I enjoyed living there. But all this is true, even though my life there began in dreadful post-war economic conditions. I have no figures on record, but my wages were about six pounds a week. I remember paying twelve and sixpence for a kettle, and twenty-eight pounds for a secondhand Underwood typewriter. It was a wonderful machine, and after more than twenty years of heavy use it looks like seeing me through a lifetime.

These difficulties were not Manchester's fault. Manchester was all right. More and more, as I came to know the place, I came to love it; but not till I had left it and begun to write novels about its scenes and people did even I realize how deeply it had bitten into my consciousness. To my dying day, live where I may, I shall be able to call up the nostalgic loneliness of its commercial back streets and alleys on a hot Sunday, not a soul stirring, a few cats and pigeons the only living things; the colored stir and tumult of its Whitmonday celebrations; the raw lamplit air, full of roaring incandescent trams, into which one emerged from the Palace or the Hippodrome on a winter's night; the backwash of cen-

turies dead and gone round that small area known as the Shambles, now, alas! smitten to extinction by the efficiency of modern barbarism.

When my call came to London I left Manchester with a salute for its gallantry in difficult years when financial bloodsuckers played the devil with its men and its machines; with thanks for a multitude of intangible gifts; with a sense of debts that cannot be repaid.

IV

Why blame the politicians? Weren't we all to blame for the inertia, the sloth, and the blindness that made contemptible the decades between the wars? Of course we were. We are awake now, and, looking back, most of us are amazed and ashamed, I think, at the condition into which we drifted. Lytton Strachey seems to me one of the significant figures of those twenty deadly years. Look at the celebrated portrait of him by Henry Lamb; the dry, desiccated, juiceless, cynical man whose very contact is enough to freeze all generous emotion and immobilize all noble endeavor. And we took him to our hearts! He bowled over our idols, and we applauded him. He jeered at nobility, pretending it was humbug, and we said, 'Yes, of course it is humbug.' Florence Nightingale, Arnold of Rugby, anyone who had opposed endeavor to sluggishness, faith to despair, was an appropriate butt of his harsh, despairing, and faithless creed. He raised the banner of negation, and we were all ready to enlist beneath it. A war had been won, or so we thought, and peace was here; and what was a man to do with peace save enjoy the plenty that proverbially accompanies it? What did it matter to us that this proverb was as cockeyed as most? The Rhondda was a long way to the west and Jarrow a long way to the north. They need not disturb us. The great thing was that here, at last, was Peace, and this time we were going to keep it.

Nothing effective was done, though throughout those years when even yet some defense might have been prepared the knowledge accumulating in government archives must have been immense and frightening. Unlike us who could only guess, they were in a position to know. All the resources of an Intelligence organization were at their finger tips; and in every European capital diplomats were observing the accelerated rush to the abyss. What was done about the diplomats' reports? In the House of Lords on July 2 of last year the curtain was lifted a little. Diplomat after diplomat complained that his advice had been ignored. Lord Rennell of Rodd, a former Ambassador in Rome, said: 'In my long experience, there have been few occasions on which the advice given by the head of a mission has not been right. The difficulty has been to get it acted upon. I could quote instances that would astound you of advice given by men on the spot which was entirely ignored at home, and of great difficulties and enormous expense consequently incurred.'

The journalists, the diplomats, the public speakers were not alone in raising a warning cry. Mr. George Gibson, the President of the Trades Union Congress, speaking in Manchester on August 21 last, said: 'As far back as 1934 we received through our own channels reports of the building of underground aerodromes in Germany. We passed the information on to the Government, but I am not sure that what we did was appreciated as it might have been. In 1935 Sir Walter Citrine, the secretary of the T.U.C., on behalf of the T.U.C. General Council, made a declaration deploring the lack of resistance to Hitler. In 1936 Mr. Ernest Bevin told the T.U.C. that Hitler was not going to be defeated by mere resolutions, and the T.U.C. then undertook to meet the Government and promise support for a rearmament program. A year later the T.U.C. and the Labor Party jointly declared themselves ready to assist to raise and maintain any

armed force that might be necessary to fulfil our obligations under the League of Nations Covenant.'

Never, it would seem, was the reality of a situation dinned into ears more clearly or persistently than this situation was dinned into the ears of our Government for ten years before the bolt was loosed; and all we got was complacency, evasion, lies.

V

I had always intended to write novels, but now, when I had entered into my forties, there was nothing to my credit save *Darkie and Co.*, the book for children which I had sold outright for fifty pounds. It hardly seemed a book at all. It had been written for fun. The boys had been brought up on Kipling and Doolittle, Milne's *When We Were Very Young*, *The Wind in the Willows*, and all that sort of thing; all good, I thought, though the teasing poor Mr. Milne received for his Christopher Robin amounted almost to persecution. It was a completely nonsensical exhibition of spite and possibly of subconscious jealousy. To read some of the things that were written about the book, one would have imagined that, in the opinion of the writers, it was every author's business to cater for minds attuned to high philosophy and what is so absurdly called 'new writing.' New writing! In plain fact, it was Mr. Milne's business — and how magnificently he understood it! — to cater for small children; and as a parent whose small sons read every word that Mr. Milne wrote in that fashion I bear this testimony to his complete understanding, and thank him for giving my children many delightful hours.

But the time came — they were such devourers of books — when the problem of finding something new and good was difficult to solve; and they said: 'Why don't you write us a book?' So I wrote *Darkie and Co.*, reading each chapter to them in bed as it was finished. They were the only critics who have ever

caused me to alter something that I have written. They objected so strongly to a chapter in my next children's book, *Sampson's Circus*, that it was completely rewritten, to the book's gain.

When I went to London, *Darkie* was my only book. I had not been reviewing for long when I was impressed by the number of indifferent novels which earned for their authors if not celebrity at any rate a moderate reputation. It seemed to me that, if I did not succeed in writing something of real worth and quality, I could anyway produce a book as good as these. So one night I began to write *Shabby Tiger*.

My days were very full. I could not give more than a bit of the evening to novel-writing. I arranged that dinner henceforth should be at half past six; and at eight o'clock I sat down to write till ten or eleven. It depended on how I got on. When I had written a thousand words I was finished for the night.

Never more than in the writing of *Shabby Tiger* did I cast myself completely upon chance. When I first sat down to it I had not one idea of what the book was to be about or what sort of people were to appear in it. I wrote an opening sentence that came out of nowhere: a sentence that seems to me now shamefully melodramatic and twopence colored: 'The woman flamed along the road like a macaw.'

How does one write a novel, with no more material than that to begin with? Well, here at any rate is a woman, and already we have begun to give her characteristics: she is a striking, flamboyant creature. Moreover, she is on a road. Where does the road come from? — which is to say, What is her past? I began at once to see her, to know something about her. I gave her a name in my mind, and that again somehow made her clearer. Being on a road, she will meet someone if she goes far enough; so that she has a future as well as a past. The thing to do now is to go along with her and see whom she meets. When they

meet, the impact of the two will have something to do with shaping this future; and what the past of the woman has been, and the past of the man she is going to meet, will perhaps have even more to do with it. So, by the end of the first evening's writing, Anna Fitzgerald had met Nick Faunt; 'and all you have to do,' I said to myself, 'is to follow these two wherever they choose to go, and when they come to the end of the journey you will have come to the end of the novel.'

Following this fashion of complete improvisation, the novel was written, and I rarely knew from day to day where the next night's work would lead me. One thing I quickly discovered: now that I was out of Manchester, I wanted to write about Manchester, that Manchester became irresistibly the background of the book, and that it meant more to me than any other city I had known. When Nick and Anna stand in Manchester's Piccadilly with the people rushing home from their work and the red trams tolling their bells as they crash along the steel rails, and Nick says: 'By God, Anna, it's a grand town to come back to. I could poison anyone who runs Manchester down' — then Nick was speaking for me.

There was nothing about the reception of this book or my next to lead me to suppose that my third novel would be successful all over the world. When it was published in England it was called *O Absalom!* When the time came for publication in the United States, William Faulkner had just published a novel called *Absalom, Absalom!* and my American publishers wished to avoid a clash with this title. So they themselves, rejecting several suggestions of mine, chose the title *My Son, My Son!* which is simply a continuation of the Bible phrase from which my title had been taken: 'Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!' Under this new title, the book was so great a success in America that *My Son, My*

Son! was used for all subsequent English editions, too. Most of the translations were of *My Son*, *My Son!* though the Dutch stuck to *O Absalom!* and the Germans found something quite new, *Geliebte Söhne*. In several countries it ran as a serial story; and the films translated it into a farce. In short, I had what I can testify is the very queer experience of finding myself, in middle age, suddenly translated from the status of wage-earner to that of a more or less independent being. I had always said that I would not rely on novel-writing for my living until I had written a novel that sold a hundred thousand copies. When last I checked the figures *My Son*, *My Son!* had sold about three quarters of a million, and it is selling still.

There was no improvisation about this book. There was something so queer about its genesis that I shall set down here just what happened. I had been to Cornwall for a holiday, and traveled home on the Cornish Riviera Express, one of the most punctual and reliable trains on the British railways. One does not expect the Riviera Express to stop except when it is advertised to stop; but that hot day of early autumn it drew slowly to a standstill at a tiny station in Somersetshire. I was reading Mr. Maurice Hindus's book *Under Moscow Skies*, which had been sent by Mr. Gollancz for review.

When the train stopped I walked out into the corridor, to see where we were. The little station bore the name Keinton Mandeville, and I did not know then that this rustic hamlet was the improbable birthplace of Henry Irving. I still have the slip of publisher's paper that was inside *Under Moscow Skies*, and it is covered with notes, partly in longhand, partly in shorthand. One of them reads: 'At Keinton Mandeville there is a —' (I cannot now transcribe my own shorthand word.) 'A lot of rusting iron beast-pens. A zinc water-trough on posts over all. Here he hid in the water.'

On seeing that water-trough, the thought had come to my mind: 'What a place for a murderer to hide in!' Why? I don't know; but towards the end of *My Son*, *My Son!* that is where the murderer, Oliver Essex, hides.

My thoughts, as I looked at the hazy autumn landscape, were mysteriously occupied with a problematical murderer. I see I have next noted on my piece of paper: 'Absalom — boy in train — Rupert Brooke.' There was a boy standing by me in the corridor, strikingly beautiful, reminding me of the portrait of Rupert Brooke that used to preface his poems. 'Why should a murderer be physically repulsive?' I thought. 'How much more poignant if he were beautiful — like Absalom.' What would be the possible stages of his disintegration? Service in the war might begin it; service with the Black and Tans might complete it. 'Black and Tans' is the next note on my piece of paper. Then I have written 'Essex,' and lower down 'Fergus.' Fergus was changed, when the book was written, to Dermot — Dermot O'Riordan, William Essex's friend. I suppose this Essex, the murderer's father, occupied my mind then, for I have written: 'Married for money.' A shorthand note follows which I cannot decipher; then: 'Second wife young and beautiful; and Absalom.' Well, there was no second wife; but there was Livia — and Absalom. The notes continue: 'First wife only a little money. Small shop-keeper or something of that sort. Then the father writes best-seller or invents something.' As it turned out, he did both. Those are all the notes, but, with my thoughts about them, they constitute the complete skeleton of a novel that had rushed into my mind from heaven knows where. The train had stood in Keinton Mandeville station for about five minutes. I began to write the book as soon as I got home, and, working only in my spare evening hours, completed it in fourteen months.

SIR RICHARD STAFFORD CRIPPS

A Socialist Speaks for the British Empire

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

I

EXPELLED from the British Labor Party less than three years ago for demanding a united front with the British Communists, today Lord Privy Seal and spokesman in the House of Commons for the Churchill Government — that is the astonishing record of Sir Richard Stafford Cripps. Not in many years has there been so sudden a change in the fortunes of a British public man, and it is the more remarkable because it has not been due to any alteration of his opinions or his left-wing sympathies. He is still a straight-out Socialist; he still believes in working with Communists, both at home and abroad. He is still a violent critic of conservatives and reactionaries. He is still the man to whom Viscount Wolmer, now also a member of the Cabinet, referred when he rose in his seat in the House of Commons and said: 'I would not have risen but for the speech of the honorable and learned Member for East Bristol, which I venture to say would be regarded as wholly mischievous if we did not know the honorable and learned Member is wholly irresponsible.' It is the same Cripps who on November 9, 1938, refused to answer an interruption by Lady Astor, saying: 'People do not fancy their country, as do the noble Lady and her set — [Interruption]. I apologize and withdraw the word and substitute gang. They do not fancy the future of their country, like the gang of the noble Lady, as being a junior partner

in a Fascist international, ruling the common people of all countries by methods that have heretofore been reserved by their gang for native and colonial territory — methods of brutality and exploitation and the denial of freedom.'

It cannot have reassured the Astors and the Wolmers that Stafford Cripps began his career as the official Government leader of the House on February 25 by laying ruthless hands upon the sacred institution of British sport, announcing that dog racing and boxing exhibitions would be stopped as 'completely out of accord with the solid and serious intention of this country to achieve victory.' There must, he said, be thereafter no 'business as usual' and no 'pleasure as usual.' Worse, he denounced the 'small and selfish minority of people who appear to regard their personal interests in a manner not consonant with the totality of effort which is required if we are to come through the present difficulties with success.' He added: 'Such an attitude spreads a sense of frustration and disappointment, and must be dealt with ruthlessly wherever and whenever it occurs.' If this were not enough to send cold chills down the spines of those whose chief desire is to see England come out of this war with its social and class privileges untouched, Cripps blamed the 'Colonel Blimp mentality' of certain reactionary military and governmental administrators for their share in Eng-

land's loss of a part of her colonial empire. Promising an early governmental statement of a new policy toward India, Cripps made the sensational assertion that England's lost lands can only be regained, and the rest of the Empire saved, 'on condition that we hold it in the interest of the world and of the people who live in those parts.' This spells so great a revolution in British imperial policy as to make this official utterance a milestone in the history of the Empire and in the progress of this war — if this promise is lived up to.

How is it that Winston Churchill, whom the Indians have considered their most dangerous antagonist in England, who has been usually regarded as an imperialist and a Conservative, brought himself to the appointment of this radical as his personal representative in dealing with Parliament when this radical has been one of the Prime Minister's severest critics? The answer lies in Cripps's admittedly great ability, perhaps in the fact that it was known that he had resigned as Ambassador to Moscow with the avowed intention of becoming the leader of the Opposition, to attack Mr. Churchill's conduct of the war, and in the fact that the Prime Minister found himself compelled to reorganize his Cabinet and to jettison a number of his associates. At first he declined to yield, but the force of public opinion, the outspoken criticisms of the press and of many of his Conservative supporters, finally convinced him that he must give assurances to Liberals and to Labor that thereafter the conduct of the war would include, besides a recognition of the necessity of far-reaching social and democratic reforms at home, a different attitude in foreign policy. It was generally sensed that there were too many survivors of the Chamberlain régime in the inner Cabinet circle, too many members of 'the Old Guard.' The Cripps appointment plainly offered the quickest answer to these criticisms.

To the ultraconservatives in England,

Cripps seems to be not only reckless and irresponsible, but that worst of offenders, a traitor to his class, for he was born to wealth and high social position. From his remarkable and distinguished father, the first Baron Parmoor, he inherited the tradition of public service. More than that, he owes it to his father and their devoted friendship that he is not today a conservative and entirely conventional barrister. As Cripps himself has said, 'Brought up in a traditionally Conservative, middle-class family, seldom meeting any one other than Conservatives, I accepted the environment quite naturally.' It was the First World War that shook father and son out of their Conservative complacency. Stafford went to the front at once and spent the first eleven months driving a medical-supplies lorry for the Red Cross from Boulogne to the front, until he was called by the Government to become first assistant superintendent and then superintendent of a great explosives factory. For this unusual man began life as a chemist, studying under the great Sir William Ramsay at University College, London, where he invented a device for measuring densities of gases and liquids. In the explosives factory he worked until he was completely broken down, in 1916, and compelled to rest and recuperate for the duration of the struggle.

It was during this period of unemployment, Cripps says, that he had the time to reëxamine his faiths. No churchman, but like his father devoutly religious, he found it impossible to reconcile his Christianity with aspects of that war. The metamorphosis of his father was the more remarkable because Lord Parmoor had served many years in Parliament as a Conservative and had held a number of important lay offices of the Church of England. Yet he was so horrified by the injustices of the war, the denial of liberty of conscience in all countries and the rise of intense nationalism everywhere, that he became convinced some new outlook upon life was needed if civilization was

to be saved. It is said that Lord Parmoor was the only distinguished convert whom Ramsay MacDonald won for the Labor Party, and through him his son. Certain it is that Parmoor became Lord President of the Council in MacDonald's first Labor Government, and Labor Leader of the House of Lords. The first member of that House to offer a resolution for the League of Nations, Lord Parmoor stood — even during the war — for moderate peace terms and a wise justice in dealing with the beaten enemy, associating himself with Lord Lansdowne's highly unpopular demand for what was denounced as a negotiated peace. He was also among the first to defend and aid the British conscientious objectors and to insist upon their right to refuse military service.

Stafford Cripps was well started on his meteoric legal career, to which he turned after his abandonment of chemistry, when the World War came. That he is one of the two most brilliant King's Counsel and probably the highest paid trial barrister in London is generally admitted; his annual income from the law has variously been put at from \$150,000 to \$200,000. But here, too, he has felt the force of the maxim *noblesse oblige*. He has given much of his time to unpaid service for the Labor Party, for various causes, for labor unions and for individuals whose cases appealed to his sympathies or involved an important principle. Not until he was forty years of age did he decide to join the Labor Party, which speedily recognized his great talents by making him Solicitor General in the second Labor Government of Ramsay MacDonald. Eight months after Cripps took this office, MacDonald abandoned the Labor Party in favor of a National Government. In the ensuing election the Labor Party suffered an overwhelming defeat; Stafford Cripps, Clement Attlee, and George Lansbury were the only three Ministers who survived the landslide against their party.

II

But Cripps has always been something of a stormy petrel, as is almost inevitably the case when an able man has strong convictions, is often deeply stirred emotionally, and is without personal ambition to bridle his tongue. He has been charged with being inconsistent as well as reckless and irresponsible, but no one has ever accused him of cowardice or compromising. He has always stood well to the left and has been charged with wishing to abolish the British monarchy because he once said that in the ideal England to come a king would be superfluous. He has always favored the abolition of the House of Lords, and he has insisted that, if Labor regains control of the Government, it must do what Ramsay MacDonald failed to do: radically socialize the country. He has demanded rapid and effective action in such an event by means of an emergency powers bill to be put through the House of Lords by the creation of enough Labor peers to constitute a majority. There would be no temporizing and no gradual changes. He is very clear in his mind that the democracies must speed up their processes and make their governments more responsive to the popular will, yet more efficient, if they are to compete with the dictatorships. He followed the New Deal developments in this country with the greatest care, but held and still holds the view that the Roosevelt experiment was bound to fail 'unless the President was prepared to assume the economic power in the state and utilize it to terminate the chaotic injustices of capitalism by reorganizing the industrial life of the country upon a socialist basis.' He always thinks of himself as a revolutionary Socialist.

This has naturally led him from the beginning to sympathize very strongly with Russia's experiment in Communism, which he felt as far back as 1934 'had met with a very considerable degree of success.' He was always a sharp

critic of the Chamberlain and Churchill attitude toward Russia, and strongly in favor of a close alliance, and not merely because of the international dangers and difficulties. It must be admitted that here his judgment has not been as clear as in other matters, for when the Hitler-Stalin treaty was announced he mistakenly declared that: 'A pact of non-aggression between Russia and Germany will be a great reinforcement for peace in Eastern Europe. At the same time it is a lie to suggest that it leaves Germany a free hand against Poland or anyone else.' It was because of his tolerance of the British Communists that he so ardently championed the idea of a 'united front' which led to his expulsion from the Labor Party. He felt that there was no hope of turning out the Conservative Government unless the Labor Party, the Independent Labor Party, the Liberals, and the Communists were willing to forget their differences and stand together for the ousting of the capitalist government. He explained that he advocated a united front only because of the abnormal times. Save for these, he would 'not desire to encourage the party to any combination with other non-socialist elements in normal times.'

The Labor Party not only disagreed with him; it bitterly resented Cripps's drafting and widely circulating an able memorandum in support of the unity proposal. The whole Labor movement felt a deep antagonism to the Communist Party and looked with suspicion on anyone who suggested even a temporary alliance. The Labor Party did not share Cripps's profound belief that, if the National Government continued in office, war was inevitable. What had happened in Spain had deeply shaken him. When King George was visiting the United States, Cripps said in Commons that he trusted the Government was not sending him 'as the representative of a country that has been responsible not only for the encouragement of

the Fascist victory in Spain, but also for the starvation and brutal murder of the Spanish people.' Beneath that was his sincere belief, as expressed in an article in *Foreign Affairs*, that 'capitalism inevitably drifts toward war: economic nationalism is the precursor of economic rivalries which are the root cause of war. In times of difficulty the war spirit of capitalism goes with its fears, and it finds too great solace in the argument that the manufacture of munitions creates employment.'

In 1935 he had resigned from the National Executive Committee of the Labor Party, because curiously, and rather inexplicably, he did not agree with the party's support of sanctions against Italy. Later he rejoined the National Executive. But the party could not stomach his fight for a united front, which Hugh Dalton sneeringly described as a 'rich man's toy,' and on January 25, 1939, Cripps, G. R. Strauss, Aneurin Bevan (now Cripps's parliamentary secretary), and two others were expelled from the party. This was in spite of the warning of Lord Beaverbrook's anti-Labor *Express* that 'the Socialist Party will be blowing its brains out if it expels Sir Stafford.' Although Cripps later applied for reinstatement, the coming of the war and his appointment to Moscow have prevented any action; he is today a Minister without a party.

III

When the war came Sir Stafford Cripps immediately retired from the bar and offered his technical services to the Government. They were not accepted. On the night of November 30, 1939, the writer of this article discovered on the deck of a Channel steamer an immense pile of dress-suit cases, bags, hat and dispatch boxes, and golf clubs, all stamped with the same initials — a pile that seemed doubly formidable in war-time. I soon discovered that Stafford Cripps was beginning his trip around the

world, which had some important consequences. It took him to India, where he met Gandhi and his friend of school-boy days, Nehru. Naturally his reception by them was of the warmest — Gandhi even excused him from sitting on the floor and let him make use of a little stool! They well knew how often he had spoken for self-government for India. By the end of the year Cripps had composed a draft constitution giving Dominion status to India, after having talked with leaders of every shade of opinion. He rightly insisted that the crux of the whole situation is whether the British Government will acknowledge the right of India to determine its own form of government and constitution. On his return to England he demanded to know why 250,000,000 Hindus should be denied self-government because 80,000,000 Moslems are afraid of it or suggest an impossible division of the country, and he protested vigorously against the Anglo-Indian Government's making it a criminal offense to speak against the recruiting of Indians for service in the British Army.

On October 26, 1939, before leaving England, he had pointed out in the House of Commons that the war and the avowed objectives of the British Government in declaring war had 'made the treatment of India a test question in the eyes of the world, as well as of many people in this country and India itself.' The Government, he said, had declared itself against all forms of aggression and for 'a better international system. . . . On the basis of right and justice and principle, I should have thought nobody could deny that India today is fully entitled to self-government. What answer have we to give now to that demand, admitting as the Governor-General fully admits, the competence of the Indians to govern themselves, unless it be that our selfish desire to continue the exploitation of India as part of our Imperial monopoly is to override our conceptions of right and justice?' These

are momentous words to recall in view of the fact that the speaker is now in a key position in which to demand that justice be done, especially since Chiang Kai-shek has just made his plea to Churchill to draw India enthusiastically into the war by changing his Government's policy and granting a new and freer status to the Indian people.

Before these words can reach the readers of this magazine Cripps will surely have spoken again. He has made definite constructive suggestions as to what should happen in India. He has sought a legislative assembly for it, with a government formed by the majority parties in that assembly, that government to be appointed by the Viceroy as his executive council. There is where the lawyer comes in; he not only argues, he suggests remedies and he has vision. Again and again he has said that the opposition to the National Government offered 'a policy of hope and peace and freedom, based upon a determination to bring about economic justice for all people of all classes' and upon the basis of that to build an international society of law, order, and justice in place of violence and cruelty and the methods of international gangsterism. Judging by his past record Cripps will not stay long in the Cabinet if he finds that he cannot make important contributions to a new order. Since he has frequently criticized the Government for not being more specific in its war aims and not giving concrete specifications, one may be sure that he will use all his influence with Mr. Churchill and his fellow Ministers to supplement the Atlantic Charter, which has fallen so flat on both sides of that ocean.

IV

What of Cripps's mission to Russia? He went to Moscow, by appointment of Mr. Churchill, believing that Russia and England would eventually come together. Indeed a reporter testifies that Cripps predicted in the winter of 1940—

1941 that Russia would be at war with Germany before the end of June. Hitler paid him the compliment of charging him with part of the responsibility for the break between the two countries, but the truth is that Cripps was not popular in Moscow. It is a curious fact that the Bolsheviks are not enthusiastic about liberal left-wingers. They like either convinced Communists like themselves or out-and-out conservative reactionaries. Stalin would not receive Cripps as a special delegate from Churchill, so the latter had to appoint him Ambassador. The British made a bad blunder in the fateful summer of 1939 by sending a third-string Foreign Office official and a rear admiral to Moscow to negotiate the hoped-for treaty instead of sending their Foreign Secretary and Chief of Staff. Not a Russian official went to the station to say good-bye to Cripps when he left Moscow on his return to England, but, as the London *New Statesman and Nation* has pointed out, Cripps came back with the prestige of having represented his country 'in one of the few capitals where, after many failures, British policy may be said to have succeeded. . . . He held on without disaster through two extremely difficult years.' It noted also that his absence during this time prevented anybody's blaming him 'for any of our various types of disaster during the last three years.'

Mention has been made of Cripps as one with a popular following. That is true. He draws enormous audiences and yet he is in no sense a spellbinder. As an orator he lacks those rare qualities which so distinguish the utterances of Roosevelt and Churchill. He does not thrill his audiences or appeal to their emotions. On the platform he is the sincere and earnest advocate, logical, clear-cut, thoughtful, and often convincing — plainly a man who believes in his own cause, whose unselfish honesty cannot be questioned. He makes his auditors think, and, as stated, he offers

them programs, procedures, and remedies. The working people of England know that he has never stooped to conquer, that he has never played the demagogue or sought to rouse the rabble. They are ready to forgive him errors of judgment; and they do not mind if, like most reformers, his judgments are at times colored by his ardent desires. They respect him, too, because he always appears just what he is — an English gentleman of finest breeding and culture, who is totally without condescension in his advocacy of their cause.

That he has a delightful and winning personality and appearance this writer can personally testify. The memory of a long, but not long enough, day of conversation from the French coast to the border of Switzerland, interrupted by some hours in Paris, will always remain, if only because of a lasting astonishment at the extraordinary variety of Cripps's knowledge of men and affairs the world over. What will high office and the exercise of great power do to him? Will he, like so many another liberal, grow conservative and reactionary? Will he, like Ramsay MacDonald, finally betray those whose political briefs he has taken? There is solid ground for the belief that he will not. For his is the lawyer's mind and training; there is something far stronger and tougher in his fibre than in MacDonald's. One feels, rightly or wrongly, that he will be aware of the dangers that confront him. Then he is Parmoor's son and, what is more, a nephew of his mother's sister, Beatrice Webb, who, with her husband Sidney Webb, has rendered such immeasurable service to the social progress and evolution of England. Months ago it seemed plain, if only by a process of elimination, that Cripps is England's coming man. It is quite within the range of possibility that he will yet be an English Prime Minister — perhaps after Winston Churchill has seen the coming of victory. Today? Well, there is a rebel in the British Government.

WHO OWNS CROSS CREEK?

BY MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS

I

FOR learning a new territory and people as quickly as possible, I recommend taking the census on horseback. In 1930 my friend Zelma from the village was commissioned to take the census in the back-country sections of Alachua County, for she knew all the inhabitants, black and white, and every road and trail leading to their houses. None of the places could be reached by a main road, and traveling by automobile would leave most of the noses uncounted. She borrowed two horses from the manager of the Maxcey packing house, and on a bright fall morning we set out together.

I had not ridden since childhood. Even then, my mounts had been the weary work horses on the Maryland farm, and my brother and I had been able to ride safely, without saddles, on their broad backs. I was uneasy at first on my lively mare. Then the beauty of the country took me over, and I was aware only that this high vantage point was perfection for the traveler in strange places. Zelma planned a wide circle for the first day. We set out to the northwest and came to the hammock lands, across the Creek, that bordered Orange Lake. The population was sparse. I could not understand how folk could settle in the bare piney-woods, when here were uninhabited hammock acres, rich of soil, magnificent of vegetation. But the work of clearing hammock is heavy, and land easily cleared and already open is tempting to migrants who are often not aware of the differences in fertility.

The sun streamed through the interstices and glinted on the shining magnolia leaves and sparkleberry bushes. Redbirds darted down the narrow trail before us and among the palms twined with trumpet vines, the blossoms the same bright orange-red color as the birds. Coveys of quail whirled away from us.

'It's a blessing for us not many Yankees have seen country like this, or they'd move in on us worse than Sherman,' Zelma said, and reined in her horse to dismount in front of the first cabin.

We finished the scanty counting along Orange Lake and cut west toward the river Styx. The name chilled me. My mare was obstreperous, and as we moved into a wet narrow road, I thought that all that was needed to make her bolt under me was the sight of a moccasin. As though I had conjured him up, he was there. We were approaching a wooden footbridge, and the mare, who had balked at all previous bridges, was taking this one of her own accord. The snake lay on a mound of earth to the right of the bridge. He was solidly coiled, an ancestral cottonmouth, taking up as much space as a dishpan. His triangular and venomous head rested flatly on the outer edge of his coils. The mare failed to see him because he lay so still. She was intent on her footing, on the welcome sight of the road ahead. Her careful, dainty hoofs passed three inches from the dark, sleek head. I loosened my feet from the stirrups, ready to jump free. The patriarch eyed me and

did not stir. I decided that such a live-and-let-live philosophy was admirable, and I touched one finger to my hat, saluting a gentleman.

We entered the river Styx gently. Surely, death itself must come as quietly. The open fields, bright in the reality of sunlight, gave way easily to pinelands. The pines grew thicker, the sweet scent of their needles rising. The sunlight was spotty, the shadows of the tall trees wider. Here and there a live oak told of changing soil. Then, imperceptibly, we were in deep hammock. Coolness came in on us. The leaves of magnolia and bay trees shut out the sun, as all dark everlasting foliage must shut it out from the silent places of the dead. The hammock merged into cypress swamp. A trumpet vine dropped flamboyant flowers from a lone palm. The blossoms seemed gaudy and funereal. There were no birds singing from the cypresses. No squirrels swung in and out of the sepulchral arches of the trees. Out of the dimly defined road a great white bird rose, flapping noiseless wings. It was huge, snow-white as an angel of death, with a wide black mourning band around the edge of the wings. I became aware that the soft dampness of the road had turned into a soft rippling. The whole floor of the forest was carpeted with amber-colored water, alive, moving with a slow, insidious current. We had entered the river Styx.

Some English youth, fresh from his Oxford Greek and Latin, some unhappy, outlawed scapegrace, must have named this silent stream. Long ago, before the Big Freeze, Florida was a tropic land of exile. Numbers of younger sons or ne'er-do-wells were sent here from England, subsidized to stay away. Some were given funds with which to establish orange groves — funds they often squandered. One of these, morose, ironic, must have come on this unknown, unsailed waterway. Bitter perhaps, certainly homesick, he was struck by the deathly peace and the dark beauty; stirred by the

pale water hyacinths, diaphanous and unearthly; and it was truly to him the River of Death, over which, once traversed, there is no crossing back again. Because this country had become as dear as life to me, the river held for me no horror. I wondered if the greater Styx might not be as darkly beautiful. The leaf-brown overflow of water deepened to the horses' knees. The white ibis flapped away slowly and came to rest high in a cypress. Then we were on the rickety bridge over the main body of the stream, and on the other side, and counting children again.

I thought, 'It is not given to many to cross the Styx and live to tell it.'

We circled back from Orange Lake and across Lochloosa Prairie. We use the word 'prairie' in a special sense. We have no open plains, but around most of the larger lakes are wet flat areas thick with water grasses, and these we call our prairies. They are more nearly marshes, yet we save the word 'marsh' for the deep mucky edges of lake and river, dense with coontail and lily pads, and for the true salt marshes of the tidal rivers. We found no living soul across this tract. There were trails used by half-wild, gaunt cattle, and dim, deep-rutted roads traveled only by the lurching turpentine wagons that came with mule and Negro driver to scrape resin from the clay cups on the tapped turpentine trees.

We came out at last on a turpentine still and here the population was black and dense. So many little pickaninnies ran away from the cabins as the strange horses approached that it was a long job gathering them all in so that they could be counted and their fancy names and vaguely estimated ages written down on the papers. Zelma knew all the older Negroes and many of the younger ones. She joked with some and sympathized with others, recommended cures for this and that, and promised to send medicine to one, quilt scraps to another, and a pound of little conch pea seed to yet an-

other. She chided one lean brown girl for her immense brood, fathers unknown.

'I know it's too many, Miss Zelma,' the girl agreed. 'I sho' got to git me a remedy.'

By the time we had finished the Quarters, dusk was falling. Zelma knew a short cut back to the Creek. It took us by Burnt Island, and she told me fabulous tales of it in the growing darkness. There was believed to be the grandfather of all rattlesnakes living there. Only glimpses had been had of him, but several reported they had seen his shed skin, and all agreed that it was nine feet long. The 'shed' stretches, and the snake could reasonably and conceivably have been seven feet in length. There were wild boars on Burnt Island, savage, long-tusked, and dangerous. The place was also a hideout for criminals who preferred the great rattler and the wild boars to the arm of the law. I was not happy when Zelma announced profanely that high water had covered the old road she meant to take, and we were lost.

Darkness and our own uncertainty and the long hours away from the stable made the horses restless. My mare shied at every stick and reared when a hoot owl cried over our heads from a pine tree. Then the full moon rose blessedly and road and woods and prairie and water were again as plain as by day. We skirted ponds and continued in a general west-by-south direction. We came out on the Creek road, but three miles away from the Creek. We had been in the saddle from seven in the morning until eleven at night. I ached through the night, and in the morning was obliged to move with some caution. Yet my own country had been revealed to me and a twinge of pain was a small price to pay.

The second day we made a wider circle. We found a cabin here and a shack there, where even Zelma did not know folk were living — silent people who gave their statistics reluctantly. We

rode down a piney-woods road in the late morning, and where the trees broke at the edge of a clearing we heard a piano. It was a good piano, not quite in tune, and it was being played with the touch of an artist. I thought my senses were playing tricks on me. Surely I heard only the wind in the pines.

Zelma said, 'I forgot that woman was buried back here.'

The woman left the piano and came to the door. She was in immaculate rags and she had once been lovely. The house was gaping with holes and was stripped bare of all but the most fundamental pieces of furniture. Several thin, clean children came to stare at us. The woman was starved for talk with her own kind and, long after the family had been itemized, detained us. Zelma told me her story as we rode away. She had come some twenty years before on a tourist's visit to Florida, a young and beautiful girl of high breeding. Taking in a local square dance as a spectator, she had met a young Cracker and fallen absurdly in love with him, for the mating instinct knows no classes. She had married him, and her outraged and prosperous family had left her to her own devices. Her piano was the only salvage from her early life. There are hundreds of handsome and sturdy backwoodsmen who would make good husbands even for such a girl, if her tastes in living were simple. She had chosen a hopeless and worthless fellow who sat idly in the sun as her life fell to pieces about her. The children held her to him. There was something more, too: a pride that would not admit defeat. I came to know her well, and I have never known a woman to make a gayer thing of life with only empty hands to work with. The family was half-starved most of the time. Yet she made a game of hunger, and a meal of fish and cornpone was a festival. I went once to visit with her, when the girls were grown, and found them all strange spectres with their faces smeared with something wet and brown.

The woman said, 'We have no place to go and no way of going. So we think up our own ways of having fun. We're at the beauty parlor today. We read about beauty masks, so we made a trip to the edge of the lake and dug mud to make our packs.'

Martha had served her without pay when her children were born.

She said to me, 'She shames most women, don't she? I does all I can for her, 'cause me and the Lord is all she's got to look out for her, and the Lord ain't exactly put Hissself out.'

Martha fixed lunch for Zelma and me that day. We reached her house in the afternoon and were famished. She made us biscuits, and fried white bacon, and served her best preserves. She had baked sweet potatoes still hot in the wood range and when we left she gave us a paper sack of them to carry with us. Our next stop was at a small Negro cabin and we were thirsty from the salty bacon. Zelma asked for water, and a small black boy handed us up cool well water in clean gourds. When he reached up to me, he spilled the cold water on my mare's flank and she bolted like a rabbit. The woods were full of gopher holes and I dared not try to rein her in too sharply, for fear she should stumble. I gave her her head and we tore away madly, and as we went I scattered hot baked sweet potatoes all over the piney-woods. The mare and I were both trembling when she came to a voluntary stop. I was proud of myself for having kept my seat, but all I had from Zelma was her special brand of profanity for having lost the sweet potatoes.

I was sorry when the census was over and done with. The region around me was plainly mapped now in my mind; I knew everyone, black and white, and could never again be a stranger. We allowed ourselves to be interrupted for one day toward the end. The day was mild and cloudy. Our friend Fred rounded up Zelma and me to go fishing with him. The bream were on the bed and the weather was exactly right. We

protested that we should be finishing the census.

'Now you just as good to come go fishing with me,' Fred said. 'You'd ought to know, nobody ain't going to give you their census on a good fishing day like this.'

II

When I first came to the Creek, I had for facilities one water faucet in the kitchen, a tin shower adjoining the Kohler shed, and an outhouse. For the water faucet in the kitchen I was always grateful, for water pumps at the Creek are all placed in relation to the well and with little or no concern with distance from the house. When Martha lived in the Mackay house she had even no well, but must carry water from the Creek itself. My outside shower was acceptable enough in summer, though it meant going damply over the sand to the house afterward. In cold weather — and you may believe the Chamber of Commerce that we have none, or you may believe me that on occasion birdbaths have been frozen solid — in cold weather the outside shower was a fit device for masochistic monks. The icy spray that attacked the shoulders like splinters of fine glass was in the nature of a cross. I shall not forget one early Christmas afternoon, with six men gathered for dinner, the turkey savory in the oven, the pies cooling, the vegetables ready, the necessity if not the desire for the bath borne in on me, and the temperature at thirty-eight and dropping. I emerged shivering and snarled at the indifferent heavens, 'The first time I get my hands on cash money, so help me, I shall have a bathroom.'

Because of the cold shower, open at the front to a wandering world, an unfriendly shower, I took to watching for rain like a tree-toad. For when the soft sluiceways of the skies opened and the lichen shingle roof shed the waters in a surge down the northwest sheltered corner of the house, I could strip and accept the benediction. When the day

was hot the rain was cool. When the day was cool the rain was many degrees warmer, and as bland as perfumed bath powder. The water faucet and the shower, then, could be endured. It seemed to me that I had done nothing in all my life to deserve the outhouse.

It had been years since I had come any closer to one than James Whitcomb Riley's verses on the subject. But I could look back on them almost with nostalgia, for those I had known had a certain coziness and a definite privacy. The outhouse on Grandfather's farm was papered with perfectly beautiful colored pictures of reigning queens. Alexandra was magnificent. Wilhelmina was demure and very pretty in pale pink with a pearl and diamond crown. I cannot look today at the news pictures of the stout housewife in tweeds on a bicycle and believe that it is the same woman. The Queen of Norway I recall as rather austere, the Queen of Italy as blackly horselike. The building had a door with crescent windows and it stood discreetly behind a hickory tree and was reached by a high, trim boardwalk bordered with marigolds.

The outhouse that I inherited at the Creek had no boardwalk, it had no queens; it had, amazingly, no door. It stood on a direct line with the dining-room windows. One fortunate diner might sit with his back to it. The others could not lift their eyes from their plates without meeting the wooden stare of the unhappy and misplaced edifice. They were fortunate if they did not meet as well the eye of a belated occupant, assuring himself stonily that he could not be seen. For there was indeed a wire screen, and this screen had been, or so the instigator fatuously pretended, modernized with camouflage. Streaks of gray paint zigzagged across the screening. The effect was to make of a human being seated behind it a monster. The monster had gray bolts of lightning for arms and moss-gray tree trunks for legs.

The camouflage, cruelly, worked per-

fectly when approached from the path. The result was that it was impossible to tell, until too late, whether a living thing was trapped behind it. It seemed for a time that Uncle Fred had solved this problem. Two days after his arrival on a visit he asked in a low, strained voice, 'Do you have an old piece of bright flannel I could cut up?' His manner prohibited questioning. I had been here too short a time to have acquired scraps of cloth, but I brought out a ragged quilt, flaming red in color. His face brightened. He went solemnly away and a little later a two-foot-square red flag stood in the middle of the path just outside the outhouse. The technique was obvious and simple. When one went in, one placed the flag in the path. When one came out, one put the flag back inside the outhouse. One went in and put the flag in the path. One returned to the house, forgetting to put the flag back again. The flag stood like a red light against traffic, for hours and hours and hours.

These were only the day hazards. Only a pillar of fire by night would have seemed sufficient comfort and guidance, and this was never provided except by the dubious assistance of lightning. There were provided instead, none the less appalling because harmless, spiders, lizards, toads, and thin squeaking noises made by bats. Over all the dark hours hung the fear of snakes. I had arrived in Florida with the usual ignorant terror. If time proved that the sight of a snake was a rarity, there was no help then for the conviction that the next footstep would fall on a coiled rattler. An imaginary snake is so much more fearful than a real one, that I had rather handle a rattlesnake, as I have done since, than dream about one. I dreaded the sunset, thinking of the dark box of the outhouse, praying, as one does in an upper berth, that the night will, simply, pass. And once there, even on the blessed nights of moonlight, the small ominous thuds against floor and wall that by day were the attractive little

green tree-toads, by night were the advance of nameless reptiles. I would not yield to the temptation of installing in the house the old-fashioned 'conveniences,' for that was an admission of defeat. I would stick it out and the first cash money would go into a bathroom.

The first cash money from the first orange crop, a good one, disappeared into mortgage and note payments, fertilizer and a Ford, for the shabby seven-passenger Cadillac, a behemoth from affluent Northern days, had literally torn its heavy heart out on the deep sand road to the Creek, and was sold for sixty dollars to a Negro undertaker. He must have towed it with the hearse, for it was past repairing. There was a year of low citrus prices and a year of freeze. Then my first Florida story, 'Jacob's Ladder,' brought in the fantastic sum of seven hundred dollars.

The instant that I saw this wealth begin to dissolve as usual, I worked rapidly. I would not do anything so reckless as ordering a complete new bathroom outfit, but would shop around and pick up something secondhand. The boom was over, and in abandoned houses in unsold 'scrub divisions' bathroom fittings were gathering rust and discoloration.

My good friend carpenter Moe went to work on the building of the bathroom. The farmhouse had been built casually in three separate eras, and while the gap between the front and the back was now filled in with a porch, there was nothing but space between the main part of the house and the two large bedrooms, with fireplaces, that made up a wing. One stepped into the air from what, we decided, was not a French door but an Irish door. That vacuum was providential for a bathroom. It would link the two bedrooms to the house as cozily as though an architect had planned it; a careless architect, perhaps, for a difference in floor levels meant a step down from the first bedroom, which has proved no friend to the aged, the absent-minded,

and the inebriated. The oldest four of Moe's boys were big enough by this time to give a hand with the carpentering, and the small new room was filled with male Sykeses when we reached the point of measuring for the height of the shower.

Moe was a realist.

'Git in the tub,' he ordered me. 'Stand up straight. We'll git this right the sure way.'

I stepped in the tub and stood up straight.

'Now whereabouts you want this here stream o' water to hit you? 'Bout there?'

Four pairs of bright Sykes eyes helped us gauge the proper play of water on the bathing form, and I have never felt so undressed in my life. But the Sykeses rejoiced with me in the completed bathroom, and although the linoleum buckled for nearly a year, we all felt that we had achieved unparalleled elegance. If I now give an impression of *nouveau riche* when I inform guests pointedly, 'The other bathroom is beyond my room,' I am not bragging, but only grateful. I go happily from one bathroom to the other, and when a flying squirrel thumps on the roof at night, the sound is pleasing, for I am safe inside, and I remember the old Scotch prayer:—

From ghillies and ghosties,
And long-legged beasties,
And all things that go *boomp* in the night,
Good Lord, deliver us.

III

Here in Florida the seasons move in and out like nuns in soft clothing, making no rustle in their passing. It is common, for me at least, to fall on a certain kind of sunny day into a sort of amnesia. I think with a start, 'What is the time of year? Where was I yesterday? And is this May or October?'

Yesterday when I stood under the large pecan tree by the barn gate, the amnesia came over me. I had not expected a crop this year, for the trees bore

heavily last season, and are almost completely biennial in their bearing. But as I reached absently to pull down a bough, I saw that slender green nuts were forming at the growth ends of all the branches. The sight was unexpected, and I was suddenly lost in a wave of timelessness. I thought for an instant that I was back in the May of a year ago. Then it seemed to me that I had skipped this present season and had been precipitated into the coming year. The pecan tree was bearing again, and where was I in time and space? And the old comfort came, in the recurrence; and on the heels of the comfort, the despair that there was no end to seasons, but an end to me.

I wonder what spring would mean to one who was encountering it, if such a thing were conceivable, for the first time. My notion is that it would mean nothing. Spring is beautiful because it is familiar. Its implications are stirring because we understand them. We know the cold that precedes it and the hot sun that will follow it. It is generally believed that the northern spring is more portentous than the tropical or subtropical spring, because the contrast between cold and warmth, between frozen sterility and hot fertility, is more apparent. This is not true when, as in the subtropics at Cross Creek, spring is so well known that its coming is as important as a smile across a beloved face. A very clever poet, Wallace Stevens, ended a poem with saying, 'But there is no Spring in Florida.' He did not know Florida. He came as a stranger, a traveler, to Florida, and the lushness of spring was to him only lushness. He could not differentiate among the shades of green, which at Cross Creek tell us when to plant and when to fertilize and when to cultivate. He did not know when the redbird begins to sing again, and when the cypresses burst from gray bareness into a dress of soft needles and the swamp maple puts out young passionate red leaves.

At the Creek, spring is as definite and

as exciting as in Greenland. We have not had snow behind us, but we have had an ungrowing period, as have they, and life now stirs and sap rises and the creatures mate and the snakes come out of their winter's lethargy. Because it is familiar and beloved, we watch every gradation. It is dear to us because knowledge of it is necessary to recognize its variations. There is no one sign of spring, but several spontaneous burstings. At the moment of the cypresses' needled sprouting and the swamp maples' glory of color, there bloom the yellow jessamine and the redbud. If anything comes first, it is the jessamine. Along the fence rows, through the hammocks, slim dry vines are suddenly a mass of golden bloom, so fragrant that the initiate all but swoons with it. Like many tropical flowers, the jessamine is most potent in the night time. I have been on Orange Lake by night and had the scent of the jessamine come so strongly from the far shores that it seemed an immense perfume flask had been spilled from the stars. There is a cousin of the yellow jessamine, the night-blooming jasmine, whose odor is so sweet and strong that invalids cannot endure it in their rooms or outside their windows.

Martha says, 'It really tears loose after nightfall.'

The jessamine is at its height, spilling waterfalls of gold from high in the tallest trees, when the major miracle occurs. One evening there is the jessamine in the sunset, alone in a world of arrested color. The next morning there is a tinge of green across the gray Spanish moss, and infinitesimal rosy blossoms may be discovered along its strands; the distant hammock is emerald, and on the soft air floats a fragrance for which we have hungered the whole year through. The first orange blossoms have opened. For a month or six weeks we shall be giddy by day with them and at night drown in a sea of perfume. When the orange blossoms are almost done, the grapefruit blooms and then the tangerines, and

these have a sharp spiciness of odor, so that after having lived with them for a few years, one knows blindfolded which citrus fruit is flowering and what month it is. For the seasons at the Creek are marked, not by the calendar, but by fruits and flowers and birds.

When the oranges bloom, it is time for the spring fertilizing and the first spring cultivating. After a warm winter, the jessamine blooms in late January and the orange trees in early February. After an average winter, the jessamine blooms in early February and the oranges in the middle of the month. After a long winter with protracted cold, the jessamine waits wisely until the frost is over. While the orange trees are more injudicious and come into bud at what should be the proper time, regardless of temperature, they too understand that they have thrust their small white noses into an unfriendly world, and hold up the full blossoming until the atmosphere is propitious.

The wild iris is as stubborn as the orange bloom is impatient. Norton and I make useless trips every spring to the river Styx, to find the buds ready but tight-shut week after week. The iris knows what it wants in the way of April weather and waits for precisely the acceptable conjunction of rain and warmth. Then acre on acre bursts open on the same sunny morning, and the swamp bordering the Styx is blue from the edge of the narrow sand road to the farthest rim of cypresses. We must wade knee-deep to gather the flowers, going cautiously through the leaf-brown water for fear of roots or sharp cypress knees or moccasins. The egrets are nesting when the iris blooms, and fly up from their feeding like bursts of white spray when our splashing disturbs them. They light close by their nests in the cypresses and wait, preening the lacy tail feathers of the mating and nesting season, for us to finish our swamp business. The wild iris does not have the fragrance of the fleur-de-lis of cultivated gardens, but its

color is a more exquisite and a lighter blue. And where the gardener's iris may be only politely looked at, the wild iris grows in such a wanton profusion that our armfuls, taken home to the house, leave no break in the blue sheet beside the Styx.

We say at the Creek, 'When the first whippoorwill calls, it's time for the corn to be in the ground.'

The first whippoorwill may call in late February or in March. I cannot guarantee his accuracy as a weather prophet, but I have never known frost to come after that first plaintive, heart-tearing cry. If the corn is not already planted, we hurry to get it in. Our Florida whippoorwill is not the same bird that stirred me as a child on my father's Maryland farm. The bird here is the chuck-will's-widow and the call is not so melodious as that of the more northern bird. It is as though the northern call were harshened and syncopated, like the modern swing versions of Mozart and Bach. Martha told me that the bird is crying, 'Chip hell out of the red oak! Chip hell out of the red oak!' The phonetics are accurate. Martha spoiled the romance of the whippoorwill's call for me, for now I cannot hear it without repeating her belligerent and unbeautiful words.

But there was a spring night, before I knew that the whippoorwill was actually the chuck-will's-widow and that it was inciting, 'Chip hell out of the red oak!' when the spell of the cry brought me from my bed. There was a full moon and the scent of orange blossoms was shed across the night, and a whippoorwill was calling, only a little distance away. I went out into the grove and my dog went with me, and we played and danced in the moonlight under the flowering orange trees. Old Jib came wobbling to join us, and the dog and cat and I romped together until nearly dawn, and the whippoorwill came closer and closer until he was sitting within sight of us on the fence, as though he were pleased to have

dancers for his music. It is as well that no late frog-hunter passed by while we were at our frolic, or it would surely have been told as proved fact that those who live at the Creek are fey.

IV

My own cattle have given me quite as much trouble as those of the neighbors. I have had a varying succession of cows, calves, and heifers and all have been troublesome. I did not help the situation when I accepted a male Jersey calf from a friend who owns a dairy. The calf was charming when young, like all young things. His first solid food after he was weaned was a mouthful of allamanda bloom, so of course I named him Ferdinand. He came daily to the kitchen door for a bit of brown sugar. He was great friends with Old Jib the cat, and washed the cat's enraptured face with his rough tongue. Then overnight, it seemed, the calf had disappeared and Ferdinand was a very large bull of ferocious tendencies. He came of breeding age and I told Little Will that I wished the two cows, Dora and Lady, to be bred at intervals, so that I should have milk and cream and butter through the year, and not all at once in a useless superfluity. Will saw the wisdom of the arrangement. When Dora and Lady came in season simultaneously, and it was time for one to be bred and the other shut up, Little Will was beyond wisdom.

Will and Dora and Lady had all chosen Saturday afternoon for their respective flings. Little Will was gone and out of reach. Ferdinand and his amours were at my doorstep. The first I knew of it, Dora had coyly leaped the pasture fence and was eating asparagus fern from in front of the veranda. I went on with my work, meaning to drive her back a little later. I looked up from the typewriter to see Ferdinand charging into the yard. I was appalled by his size. I had not been close to him since he was a yearling. He had at that time

taken grass as usual from my fingers, chewed it a moment, rolled his eye, then pawed the earth, given a low bellow, and made for me.

'He don't like womens no more,' Little Will said. 'Jes' cow-womens.'

I had left Ferdinand strictly alone, keeping up what I had hoped were superficially friendly relations by speaking to him cordially whenever I walked past his gate. He had not reciprocated. Now he was a mammoth thing, peering at me from the veranda steps a foot away. I recalled that a sportsman's magazine had taken a poll on the most dangerous animals in the country, and the Jersey bull was at the head of the list. I saw a cluster of Creek children coming down the road with their buckets for the milk I give away. I called to them that Ferdinand was loose in the yard and to go home. Martha came from the back of the house to tell me that she was afraid we need not look for Little Will back before morning. I warned her to return to the tenant house through the back of the grove. Ferdinand crashed through the blue plumbago along the front of the house and chased Dora around the birdbath.

'Ferdinand so mannish,' Martha said proudly.

He seemed only to be doing his duty by Dora. He was much more interested in the coral honeysuckle and the orange blossoms. He fed greedily. The honeysuckle vines would have no more bloom this spring. Suddenly he took care of Dora and marched away, bored both with domesticity and the honeysuckle, toward the barn. It occurred to me that he was remembering his young days of being fed there. It occurred to me too that if ever a bull was likely to be in a quiet mood it would be at this moment. It was necessary that the cows be milked. Their calves were only two months old, and the cows were in full milk, their bags bursting. Lady saved me time by coming through the gap Ferdinand had made in the fence, and

joining the family. The two calves, Chrissy and Cissy, galloped after her from the grove where they were allowed to run free. I was tempted to let the calves do the milking, but there were gallons more than they could drain. I opened the gate of the milking lot and Ferdinand filed in haughtily, his harem trailing behind him.

I dashed to the feed barrels in the barn and brought out two brimming bucketfuls. Ferdinand took one as his mannish right and I divided the other between Dora and Lady. I tried to drive Chrissy and Cissy into their own stall, but they were excited by the family gathering and would not be driven. I was working against time and I dragged their trough into the lot and filled it. They fed happily side by side, their small tails twitching. By the time I had them settled, Ferdinand had finished his bucket and was pawing a warning cloud of earth. I brought him another. Dora and Lady had now finished theirs.

Martha came cautiously outside the lot and I commissioned her to bring feed in relays and hand it over the fence to me. I milked literally in circles. We milled about together in the small lot, Ferdinand, Dora, Lady, the two calves, the feed, and I. I milked first on one cow and then the other, according to the convenience and practicability of their positions, especially in relation to Ferdinand. A quart was as much as I could get at a time, when it was necessary to rush to the fence for a bucket of feed. I made no pretense of stripping them. I decided that if my getaway proved embarrassing, I should fling the milk bucket over the fence and follow it. I heard a groan behind me. Ferdinand, his great belly bulging, had dropped to his knees to rest. I was able to make a dignified exit through the gate. I looked back to see Dora and Lady licking Ferdinand's face, consoling him for the head-of-the-household efforts that had so exhausted him.

Martha made fierce African threats

against the missing Will. If only, I said, we did not have to go through the same thing again in the morning. The next morning the redbirds sang, the game cock crew, and the Mallards quacked cheerfully in the bright spring sunshine. There was no song in my heart and Martha muttered direly. We walked cautiously toward the lot. It was plain that Ferdinand was now past female handling.

Martha said, 'Praise the Lord!'

I looked where she pointed.

Down the road came a figure. Little Will was coming home.

'Sugar,' Martha said, 'if that was our President comin' down the Creek road, he couldn't look no better.'

V

All life is a balance, when it is not a battle, between the forces of creation and the forces of destruction, between love and hate, between life and death. Perhaps it is impossible ever to say where one ends and the other begins, for even creation and destruction are relative. This morning I crushed a fuzzy black caterpillar. It was fulfilling its own destiny, trying to complete its own life cycle. Its only sin was that it was feeding on certain green leaves that I wished to look at. In the brief instant after the crushing and before its death, did its minute mind wonder why an unnamable catastrophe had overtaken it?

When a human life is snuffed out untimely, can there be invisible forces whose wishes we offend? Can it be that one has eaten green leaves? We should be so happy to cooperate with the unvoiced demands if we were aware of them. The caterpillar would be quite willing to nibble in an adjacent field if the completion of his life span could be so accomplished.

But in crushing the caterpillar, I have fed the ants. They are hustling to the feast, already tunneling the body. The ants would applaud the treading of

caterpillars. The death of a human being feeds, apparently, nothing. Or are there psychic things that are nourished by our annihilation?

We know only that we are impelled to fight on the side of the creative forces. We know only that a sense of well-being sweeps over us when we have assisted life rather than destroyed it. There is often an evil satisfaction in hate, satisfaction in revenge, and satisfaction in killing. Yet when a wave of love takes over a human being, love of another human being, love of nature, love of all mankind, love of the universe, such an exaltation takes him that he knows he has put his finger on the pulse of the great secret and the great answer.

Here at Cross Creek we sense this, sometimes dimly, sometimes strongly. Because we have adapted ourselves, with affection, to a natural background that is congenial to us, we know that the struggle is better done in love than in hate. We feel a great pity for the industrial laborer who toils only for what it will bring him in pay, and will not do his work unless his pay pleases him. If we tillers of the soil sat down in a pet and refused to turn our furrows because our crops had failed us, the world would starve, for all its riches. We feel as great a pity for the industrial capitalist who reckons living in terms of profit and loss. Profit and loss are incidental to life, and surely there is enough for us all. We know that work must be an intimate thing, the thing one would choose to do if one had, as Tom said, 'gold buried in Georgia.' We know, above all, that work must be beloved.

We know that in our relations with one another the disagreements are unimportant and the union vital.

VI

The question once arose, 'Who owns Cross Creek?' It came to expression when Mr. Marsh Turner was turning his hogs and cattle loose on us and riding

drunkenly across the Creek bridge to drive them home. Tom Morrison, who does not own a blade of corn at the Creek, but is yet part and parcel of it, became outraged by Mr. Marsh Turner's arrogance. Tom stood with uplifted walking stick at the bridge, a Creek Horatio, and turned Mr. Marsh Turner back.

'Who do you think you are?' he demanded. 'How come you figure you can turn your stock loose on us, and then ride up and down, whoopin' and hollerin'? You act like you own Cross Creek. You don't. Old Boss owns Cross Creek, and Young Miss owns it, and old Joe Mackay. Why, you don't own six feet of Cross Creek to be buried in.'

Soon after this noble gesture was reported to me by Martha, I went across the Creek in April to gather early blackberries. I had not crossed the bridge for some weeks and I looked forward to seeing the magnolias in full bloom. The road is lined with magnolia trees and is like a road passing through a superb park. There were no magnolia blossoms. It seemed at first sight that there were no magnolia trees. There were only tall, gray, rose-lichened trunks, from which the branches had been cut. The pickers of magnolia leaves had passed through. These paid thieves come and go mysteriously every second or third year. One week the trees stand with broad outstretched branches, glossy of leaf, the creamy buds ready for opening. The next, the boughs have been cut close to the trunks, and it will be three years before there are magnolia blossoms again. After long inquiry, I discovered the use for the stripped leaves. They are used for making funeral wreaths. The destruction seemed to me a symbol of private intrusion on the right of all mankind to enjoy a universal beauty. Surely the loveliness of the long miles of magnolia bloom was more important to the living than the taking of the bronze, waxy leaves for funerals of the dead.

I had a letter from a friend at this

time, saying, 'I am a firm believer in property rights.'

The statement disturbed me. What is 'property' and who are the legitimate owners? I looked out from my veranda, across the acres of grove from which I had only recently been able to remove the mortgage. The land was legally mine, and short of long tax delinquency nothing and nobody could take it from me. Yet if I did not take care of the land lovingly, did not nourish and cultivate it, it would revert to jungle. Was this land mine to abuse or to neglect? I did not think so.

I thought of the countless generations that had 'owned' land. Of what did that ownership consist? I thought of the great earth, whirling in space. It was here ahead of men and could conceivably be here after them. How should one man say that he 'owned' any piece or parcel of it? If he worked with it, labored to bring it to fruition, it seemed to me that at most he held it in fief. The individual man is transitory, but the pulse of life and of growth goes on after he is gone, buried under a wreath of magnolia leaves. No man should have proprietary rights over land who does not use that land wisely and lovingly. Steinbeck raised the same question in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Men who had cultivated their land for generations were dispossessed because banks and industrialists believed they could make a greater profit by turning over the soil to mass, mechanized production. But what will happen to that land when the industrialists themselves are gone? The earth will survive bankers and any system of government, capitalistic, fascist, or bolshevist. The earth will even survive anarchy.

I looked across my grove, hard fought

for, hard maintained, and I thought of other residents there. There are other inhabitants who stir about with the same sense of possession as my own. A covey of quail has lived for as long as I have owned the place in a bramble thicket near the hammock. A pair of bluejays has raised its young, raucous-voiced and handsome, year after year in the hickory trees. The same pair of redbirds mates and nests in an orange tree behind my house and brings its progeny twice a year to the feed basket in the crepe myrtle in the front yard. The male sings with a *joie de vivre* no greater than my own, but in a voice lovelier than mine, and the female drops bits of corn into the mouths of her fledglings with as much assurance as though she paid the taxes. A black snake has lived under my bedroom as long as I have slept in it.

Who owns Cross Creek? The redbirds, I think, more than I, for they will have their nests even in the face of delinquent mortgages. And after I am dead, who am childless, the human ownership of grove and field and hammock is hypothetical. But a long line of redbirds and whippoorwills and bluejays and ground doves will descend from the present owners of nests in the orange trees, and their claim will be less subject to dispute than that of any human heirs. Houses are individual and can be owned, like nests, and fought for. But what of the land? It seems to me that the earth can be borrowed but not bought. It may be used, but not owned. It gives itself in response to love and tending, offers its seasonal flowering and fruiting. But we are tenants and not possessors, lovers and not masters. Cross Creek belongs to the wind and the rain, to the sun and the seasons, to the cosmic secrecy of seed — and beyond all, to time.

CHRISTIANITY NOW AND AFTER

BY MICHAEL DE LA BEDOYERE

I

THOUGH a number of widely read books attest the serious concern in wartime England with the rôle of Christianity, I have come across no real attempt to assess either the effects of war on Christianity or the effects of Christianity on war. This omission is very remarkable when we recall the vast amount of evidence that goes to show that more and more people are asking themselves whether the clue to a better post-war world may not, after all, lie in a return to the traditional moral values taught and inspired by the Christian Church. One wonders, in fact, whether the omission is not deliberate — whether it may not be the result of an instinctive conspiracy not to put this 'last hope' to the test during the period of crisis, for fear that it will not survive a candid examination under these conditions. Let it remain, as it were, in cold storage during this long and perilous journey, and let it be exposed to the light of day when conditions suit it better. Meanwhile we shall be content to have it at the back of our minds, glancing at it occasionally for comfort, appealing to it when convenient, and reserving it as a possible solution to the troubles that war will leave in its wake.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this method of envisaging Christianity in its relation to contemporary problems damns Christianity and damns us. It is like a drunkard who resolves to give up drink, not immediately, but in three months' time. His resolution is

bogus, and so is he. However hopeful his moral sentiments may seem to himself, he will remain a drunkard for life. If there is anything at all behind this renewed interest in Christianity, it must be acted upon at once, whatever the consequences — and the first step is to examine in all candor just what is the worth of Christianity today and in relation to the supreme crisis of the day.

During the first two years of the war the stage was set for the entry of Christianity as one of the chief actors in the struggle. There was well-nigh universal agreement that Naziism was essentially anti-Christian — and if certain people might try to argue that Fascist totalitarianism in its reaction against the anarchy and materialism of democracy possessed a certain Christian flavor, Hitler obliged by vigorously persecuting the Church. To make assurance in this matter doubly sure, Hitler obliged still further by making a pact with Bolshevism, the self-avowed archenemy of all Christianity. And the first country to be savagely destroyed was Catholic Poland, the spoils being divided between the Nazis and the Bolsheviks. It was true that, despite this almost classically clear-cut setting of the scene, the nations failed to range themselves into logical groups. Plutocratic England and anticlerical France — to describe them at their worst — found themselves the champions of Christ, while Catholic countries like Italy, Spain, Hungary, and Ireland retired behind the backdrop to

make 'noises off' in support, it too often seemed, of the Nazis and Bolsheviks. However, one could scarcely expect that after generations of secularism the nations could suddenly stage a pukka crusade; and inevitably nationalist, political, and economic rivalries, rather than Christian ideals, dictated the actual parts to be played. The point, however, was that everything seemed to conspire to provide an underlying motif or plot in terms of Christianity versus anti-Christianity.

Moreover, as the action of the war proceeded, it might be expected that the Christian weakness of the protagonists of Christianity would prove to be their strength. Was it not in fact clear that the Nazis and the Bolsheviks, whatever their other faults, possessed a ready battle-cry? Here were the champions of the new order, the knights of the oppressed nations and peoples ensnared by the hollow and hypocritical promises of liberty, the forgers of that super, truly popular, modern State, embodying at once the latest achievements of technique and the Marxist claim for universal social and economic security. What had Britain and France to offer in place of this? They could only drag up the old, long-corrupted baits that had done service during the last war and given Europe an era of anarchy and poverty. Why, they hardly had the courage to mouth the rotten formulæ of 'war to end war,' 'the rights of small nations,' 'war to safeguard democracy'! In this war against the enemies of Christianity, which was being fought without any solidly constructive and positive ideal, surely the way lay open for the adoption of the counter-ideal, the ideal of Christianity itself! Never were the conditions for religious conversion made so seemingly simple.

And if there was any doubt about the next step, that doubt could be very speedily settled, for the first figure of the Christian world, three months after the outbreak of war, gave the world five

peace points, and these inevitably embodied in a more Christian language the essential cause of England and France at war with Naziism and Bolshevism.

II

And now when we look back on all this from the viewpoint of today, we rub our eyes and wonder whether it was all a mirage. For if we try to reckon up what came out of it, we find that the result amounts to almost nothing. France was soon defeated, and, disgusted with the past, the majority of Frenchmen tried to erect a new and Christian order on the ruins of the old disorder. Britain stood up and has lived, we can soberly hope, to turn the tables on the Nazis. But is this courage and tenacity Christian in inspiration?

On the Christian front certain interesting events have taken place. Newspapers of repute, for example, have been awakened to the fact that thousands of English children evacuated from the towns to the countryside have never even heard the name of Christ, save as a swearword, and as a consequence there exists some public opinion in favor of enforcing a basic religious education in the state schools. New youth movements, designed to create a better national morale, occasionally recall that there must be some connection between such a morale and Christian values. The different religious denominations have found it possible to work together in support of ten points, five of which are the Pope's peace points, the other five embodying social reforms over the signatures of Cardinal Hinsley, the two Anglican Archbishops, and the Moderator of the Free Churches. Cardinal Hinsley himself, because of the forthrightness of his denunciations of Nazi tyranny and persecution, enjoys a national status unprecedented in the case of a Catholic prelate since before the Reformation. Finally, the presence in London of representatives of overrun

Catholic countries, like Poland, Belgium, and Luxemburg, maintains a valuable contact with Catholic forces on the Continent.

Taken together, all this is not really very impressive, and its influence on the mind of government and people is not important. Moreover, such influence as it may have had has been considerably weakened since the Nazi invasion of Soviet Russia, the magnetic pole of Moscow proving itself in a few hours to be infinitely more potent than that of the Vatican (handicapped by being enclosed within Italy) or of Canterbury.

It is surely very extraordinary — and very suggestive — that, despite the remarkably favorable stage-setting for a serious turning again to Christianity in a nation of perturbed and questioning people, so very little apparently has come of it. Does this mean that Christianity is really dead in England? And, if so, what consequences must we expect?

I think we must all, whatever our personal convictions, understand that this is a very important question. In England, as in America, there obviously survives an extremely strong conviction that a people must have spiritual roots if it is to survive. Indeed it can be argued that the world disorder which followed the last war has been challenged in the name of *spiritual* values. Fascism, Naziism, and Bolshevism have made their differing appeals in the name of the spirit, and in return they have enjoyed the quasi-religious fanatical devotion of millions. In one respect their spiritual claim is quite bogus in that opponents have been crushed with ruthless cruelty. In other words, the masters have determined the quality and limits of the spirit they wished to evoke, and their reason was certainly not spiritual. But it is wrong to describe as bogus a great many of the ideals which have been propagated among the Italian, German, and Russian peoples. The national revival and re-ordering of Italy is not a bogus ideal, nor is the German claim to an honorable

place among the nations, and still less is the social aspiration of the new Russia. These ideals are not in themselves bad or artificial; what is wrong with them is their disorder in relation to other equally important ideals which together and in harmony form an ideology worthy of the human beings living in society. And what is worse about them is that the goodness in them has been deliberately exploited by evil.

In England and America a far more perfect harmony of ideals survives, but we, on our side, lack the fervor and spiritual conviction which have been generated — so largely artificially — in the dictator countries. We are in the position of men who have had their spiritual crises long ago, who once fought hard to win a higher way of life, who have won, but who now take the victory for granted and find that it does not afford all the satisfaction which they once expected of it. Such men, moreover, are apt to be extremely complacent. They do not realize that times and fashions change and that younger men may consider what they have achieved to be but the starting point for another struggle to find a better harmony between themselves and the world *they* are in.

The middle-aged who direct our fortunes in England and America tend to drift between habit-generated conviction about the spiritual value of democratic institutions and a pricking of conscience as to whether these institutions are capable of giving men what they need in the world as it is shaping today. Such a state of mind is not one that evokes confidence or enthusiasm, though it is perfectly capable — as we have seen in this country — of stoutly defending the past against the crudity and barbarity of those who set out to destroy the old world. But even if this defense proves wholly successful, the real struggle will be just beginning, not only because the war will have destroyed the old world, but also because new and living convictions must replace the tem-

porary and negative convictions of war if a new world is to be built. It is obvious, if we look back, that even twenty years ago the victors were without a sufficiently strong spiritual conviction about a program derived from the past. The new world was utterly unable to withstand the new men who were in revolt against the post-war settlement.

Today, as then, there survives in England and America a genuine conviction about the desirability and indeed the necessity of maintaining what we call the decencies of civilized life, — what President Roosevelt has called the four freedoms, — but already we have long passed the stage when there exists an equal conviction that our democratic institutions, as they stand, can be counted upon to defend these freedoms. In other words, the mere negative ideal of destroying a barbaric enemy and of maintaining the decencies of our civilization may suffice to keep resistance going until the Nazis are defeated, but we cannot count on our present spiritual convictions to see us through in the giant work of rebuilding once the war is over. Somehow or other we must see new visions and kindle new inspirations. Can we afford to wait until the end of the war before we concern ourselves seriously with this?

III

I noted at the beginning that the relations between Christianity and the war had not been studied, even though popular books examining the worth of Christianity in relation to the times had been written. The reason for this is fairly clear. The fact is that a country at war against a detested and morally despised opponent does not need the support of a constructive and complex ideal like Christianity, but it does subconsciously remain concerned with what is to happen after the war; and with this worry at the back of its mind it is interested in examining the merits of the various solutions that may be offered.

Naturally enough, countries with a Christian heritage will not fail in wartime to invoke God and Christianity in support of their cause, and this has been done frequently enough by England at war. Even *der Führer* does not forget at solemn moments to refer to the Deity. But there are very strong reasons for leaving it at that. For, the moment we begin to inquire seriously what Christianity demands of a nation at war, we begin to receive awkward answers. At the very start there may be a scruple as to whether Christianity and modern war are in any way compatible. And even if the arguments of the Christian pacifist can be answered, they may well leave, as it were, a taste in the mouth. At any rate they may serve to weaken somewhat the strong foundation of spiritual conviction upon which a popular struggle must be based.

It soon becomes clear that the Christian ideal, of its nature, is universal. A particular country may embody that ideal, but only if it is ready in the long run to sacrifice its particularist claims to the wider claims of a universal faith; and this goes against the instinctive feelings of a great people fighting for their lives, more especially if the war be protracted and morale need to be keyed up. There is no getting away from the truth that a faithful Christian community must always sow the seeds of division within an empire, and the division will grow in importance precisely in those times of spiritual and moral strain which a long war evokes. Hitler's persecution of Christianity can be largely understood as an expression of his insistence upon complete unity of conviction to carry through his revolution and his war.

Lastly, the Christian ideal involves the acceptance and practice of a moral code, even in the methods of warfare, which may at times amount to a positive weakening of the war effort. And the more seriously Christianity is taken, the more awkward the code. Even though a nation may sincerely start out with the

intention of fighting cleanly, the methods of the enemy may force it to retaliate in kind. Yet for Christianity two wrongs can never make a right. Moreover this Christian moderation tends to clash more and more with the instincts of a people at war, for these inevitably degenerate into hatred, cruelty, deceit — and even at home the nervous excitement caused by war lets loose passions which are certainly incompatible with the profession of crusader.

Indeed a modern total war gives rise to a very paradoxical state of affairs. We find in England — and doubtless to some extent in Germany as well — that a people gives of its very best. The bravery, patience, charity, endurance, which civilians as well as soldiers manifest in war are truly extraordinary, and we can say that national morale — in the best sense of the word — is far superior to what it was in the bad old days of peace. Yet this outburst of rare virtue is admittedly and openly in support of passionate and destructive ends which, however broadly justifiable in terms of patriotism and self-defense, would revolt men in time of peace. Thus the very people who deny themselves most for the good of their country and neighbors are capable of harboring sentiments of such cruelty, and of telling such lies, that they could not recognize themselves in more normal times. In fact we must admit that there is considerable resemblance between a peaceable and democratic people at war and the fanatics who martyr themselves in the service of the revolutionary dictators who cause war.

To expect, therefore, that a true Christian ideal can be pursued by a people fighting in a cause however just, and even on a stage set for a crusade against antichrist, is to expect a very great deal. And we need not be surprised to find that, while the word 'Christianity' may be freely invoked, there will be little evidence of the reality and little disposition to study the reality while the struggle lasts.

Against this background the actual degree of Christian thinking in this country during this war may appear more impressive. For — leaving out of account the war itself and its conduct — there has been a good deal of searching of heart on the part of the Churches themselves and on the part of the people. Compared with the last war, the Churches have more stoutly insisted that the first war settlement must be just, but, in the main, Christian thinking has centred round the social question. I think that there are very few thinking people in England today who would call themselves Christian who are not determined that Christianity must lead and everywhere support a radical political and social policy calculated to give social security to every person in the kingdom who is willing to pull his weight with society. Indeed the conviction is widespread that any attempt to preach Christ and the Christian way of life in divorce from reforms calculated to give all men the chance to be men is little short of hypocrisy. Though there are still far too few Christian preachers and writers intelligent or active-minded enough to understand the imperative need for dragging Christianity out of the old social and class ruts, or to translate the teaching of the Gospels into words and ideas that the ordinary person today will understand and apply to his own circumstances, the progress made has not been unimpressive. Though the complaint is made that the churches, especially the Anglican, are still empty, the war has offered exceptional opportunities for contact between clergy with spirit and initiative and the people, notably in the shelters and among the forces.

IV

All this, however, can only be said to touch the fringe of the real problem as many people are seeing it: the problem of inspiring the nation again with a vision clear enough and a spirit strong

enough to enable it to base the post-war reconstruction on a foundation in harmony with the Christian heritage of free institutions, yet in keeping with the technique and knowledge of the present day as well as the new social aspirations to which the dissemination of that knowledge has given rise. And this question becomes all the more important in that the future fate of all Europe must be closely bound up with the lead that a militarily victorious Britain will have to give. For if, so it is argued, Christianity cannot provide the required inspiration, Communism will carry the masses off their feet.

This may seem a fantastic alternative, and so it is if we give to Communism its usual meaning. There is, for example, very little danger of England going 'Bolshie,' more especially after a victory. But if we try to face the problem of post-war England and post-war Europe we may be forced to acknowledge the existence of a danger that can well go by the convenient name of Communistic. I mean that the political and economic problems which the war must leave in its train are such that only virtually totalitarian methods can hope to solve them. It is, of course, futile to prophesy what shape the new Europe will take, how the frontiers will run, what sort of autonomy will be left to different countries; but it does seem clear that the problems, if anarchy is to be avoided, will have to be treated as a whole and that order will have to be imposed by strong force in the face of much hostility. If this can be done, presumably in the name of England, America, and Russia, the new — and interim — order will have to translate itself into a living system, spontaneously backed by the people.

Will it translate itself in time into free institutions, suited to the new needs, or will it translate itself into a despotic order backed by materialist-minded masses trained to support a super Machine State which claims to create for all

a pagan paradise on earth according to the latest prescriptions of scientists, technicians, and popular publicists? That is the sort of Communist or Left totalitarian danger one can reasonably foresee. And we must honestly admit that such constructive spiritual forces — apart from the war itself — as tend to make themselves manifest and heard today would seem to lead to some such end. It is true that, apart from a handful of actual Communists, those who have the ear of the public believe themselves to be advocating a new order that will be free and fundamentally democratic, but this of course was also the claim of the earlier Marxists. Not only in their increasingly fervent admiration of Soviet Russia (whose despotism and past policies, internal and external, they wholly overlook), but also in their advocacy of efficiency, ease, comfort and leisure for all, and ever-greater responsibility resting on the State, they in fact pursue a definite totalitarian path. And if the picture they draw sounds extremely attractive, it is because they are always taking for granted a post-war world of plenty. When we begin more soberly to measure up the ways they advocate against a post-war world filled with political and ideological jealousies and for years at least economically impoverished, we see plenty of force and despotism, but very little in the way of that wealth and comfort and ease upon which they would base the future freedoms.

What is the alternative? Between the two wars there were various attempts in Europe to organize up-to-date régimes in harmony with the natural genius of the people and closely associated with their best religious traditions. Perhaps at this date one may safely mention Portugal as an example. To mention Italy in its earlier days of Fascism, or Austria under Dollfuss and Schuschnigg, or Nationalist Spain, is enough to damn one in the eyes of most Anglo-Saxon publicists and not a few Christians. Nor do I wish to write an apologia for politi-

cal experiments, all of which have fallen very far short of the hope that could once have been sincerely placed in them. My point is rather that serious efforts were made to counter the extremes of totalitarianism, whether of the Left or the Right, by returning to a political order suited to the people rather than to the abstract political theories of the liberal philosophers of the laissez-faire world of yesterday; and in each case it was fully realized that the only hope lay in renewing the traditional religious inspiration of the people in question.

Any brand of totalitarianism is wholly unsuited to an Anglo-Saxon people, and a Left totalitarianism would have to be very well disguised. The lesson to be learned from the Continental experiments is not that we should imitate their particular authoritarianism, but rather that we should reframe our own democratic institutions (perhaps along the line of true democratic corporatism) by seeking to relate them far more directly to those Christian principles of the responsibility and freedom of the person in a technical age which were the inspiration of the earlier democracy and which suited from the beginning the natural political genius of the Anglo-Saxon people. This means that the first care of the new society must be to safeguard the spiritual and material conditions under which alone full human responsibility can be exercised. It must be a *positive* democracy truly 'for the people,' not, as in the past, a negative democracy for the benefit of those who are slick enough to take selfish advantage of democratic institutions. And this will be utterly impossible until the people realize once again where their true good lies, and once again recover a deep and passionate spiritual conviction that human welfare can only be secured if man and society are ordered in accordance with that Divine design, the guiding lines of which are made clear in the Christian dogma and moral teaching that man is made in the image of the Incarnate God.

Is there any practical hope that this can be achieved? The only possible sincere answer is that there appears at present to be very little hope. Despite occasional exceptional appearances, there can be no doubt that war is bad for Christianity. While a certain lip-service is paid to useful Christian values, we are forced to agree to a kind of moratorium on practical Christian behavior, and the noble virtues that are displayed in wartime have a very different inspiration. After the war Christianity will have to pay for this, for the world, sickened by war, will straightway turn round and accuse Christians of lack of courage in not having opposed war according to their best principles. This makes a poor beginning for a Christian renaissance.

As against this, one must reckon the increasing sense of perplexity in the minds of many who wonder whether a world reduced to such barbarism can ever have been on the right path. This causes renewed interest in Christianity, and it may cause also a serious inquiry, on the part of Christians as well as non-Christians, about the true spiritual state of Christianity itself. And in this lies the best — I should say, the one — hope for the future. If Christians themselves have the courage and intelligence to examine their own consciences as they seek to solve the perplexities of a world at war, there remains a chance that Christian truth and Christian values may play an effective part in the building of the post-war world.

On the whole it seems to me that there is some evidence of this in England at war today. If Christianity, faced by the appalling dilemma of an apparently just and even holy war, seems to allow a suspension of its traditional teaching, Christianity is also asking itself how far it is responsible for the present chaos, and it is endeavoring to help a perplexed people by offering a more clear-cut and practical vision of a possible Christian order based upon a purer spiritual inspiration.

Alas, this is but a breath of light wind against a relentless tide. Yet it may be that all that we, whether Christians or not, hold dearest in our Western civilization depends upon this breath becoming a strong wind — 'a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting,' as the Scriptures relate of the first Pentecost. Luckily perhaps (in view of the little available of Christian regeneration), the spirit of God and the spirit of Christianity is not amenable to measurement. In the long run Christianity produces its effects on the world, not through study and talk and good resolu-

tions, but through reborn souls. It is this individual person and that individual person who must be converted to a higher and deeper way of life, not Man in the abstract, nor even the Nation. Christ Himself changed the current of history, and a single Saint Francis profoundly affected the ways of men. And no one can foretell the possible effects on the post-war world of what may be going on, unseen and unheard, in the hearts of many who perceive — and surely never with greater evidence — the vanity of the structures which contemporary man has tried to erect in worship of himself.

PRAYER

BY CONRAD AIKEN

Lord, Lord, — these miracles, the streets, all say, —
bring to us soon thy best most golden day,
that every stick and stone for thee may shine,
thy praise be sung in every shaft and line.

Lord, Lord, — the steeples and the towers cry, —
deepen beyond belief this ancient sky,
darker than time, or terror, be that blue,
and we'll still praise thee by still pointing true.

Lord, Lord, — the fountains weep, — hear our delight,
these waters for birds and children we keep bright,
where children shout, and the stone dolphin sings,
thy rainbow blessed by holy eyes and wings.

Lord, Lord, all voices say, and all together,
stone, steel, and waking man and waking weather,
give us thy day, that once more we may be
the endless miracle that embodies thee.

THE NEGRO AND HIS SCHOOLING

BY VIRGINIUS DABNEY

I

NEGRO education has made tremendous strides below Mason and Dixon's Line during the past several decades, not only in the primary and secondary schools, but in the publicly and privately supported institutions of higher learning. If the amount of money appropriated by the various states to Negro education at all levels is still low, by comparison with the allotments to the dominant race for the same purpose, the great improvement is obvious. Just as the number and quality of the Negro elementary and high schools have increased enormously since the early years of the century, the facilities for collegiate instruction have multiplied many times over. As recently as 1916 the Negro colleges of the country, nearly all of which are in the South, showed a total enrollment of only 2637. Six years later the figure had doubled, and by 1927 it had more than doubled again. By 1932 it had leaped to over 22,000, by 1938 to nearly 34,000, and by 1941 to over 45,000. In other words, the enrollment in these institutions increased more than seventeen times in two and a half decades. It is still going up.

Moreover, there is a growing disposition on the part of Southerners to facilitate this process, instead of hindering it. The words of the late Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt are finding a responsive chord. Kirkland said 'the intellectual freedom and efficiency of the white race will be promoted by generous treatment of the Negro,' and that 'oppression of every kind will work a double

woe.' He added: 'In whatever form slavery may be perpetuated, just so far it will put shackles on the minds of the Southern whites. If we treat the Negro unjustly, we shall practise fraud and injustice toward each other. . . . The South will be free only as it grants freedom.'

The constantly improving attitude of the whites toward the desirability of providing decent educational facilities and standards for the blacks is manifest. There always has been a minority of Southerners who have believed education offers the nearest thing to a 'solution' of the Negro problem, and a poll taken by the Gallup organization in the spring of 1941 for the National Education Association showed the white people of the South to be divided almost exactly half and half on the question of providing equal public-school advantages for Negro children. A statement from R. B. Eleazer, educational director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, apropos of this survey, declared that these results 'are believed to be much more favorable to the Negro child than would have been the case ten years ago.' That is unquestionably true. Moreover, the 50 per cent who still object to making equal public-school facilities available to the Negroes are being brought into line gradually by decisions of the Supreme Court which leave them few if any alternatives to compliance.

These court decisions have been secured, in most instances, by the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and that aggressive agency undoubtedly should be credited with achieving certain substantial benefits for the Negroes of the South, benefits to which they are entitled in both law and morals. The results are particularly patent in the sphere of colored schoolteachers' salaries. There is little reason to believe that these salaries would have been brought up to the level of those paid the white teachers, despite the fact that work and requirements are identical in many instances, without the imperatives of the Federal courts. To-day those salaries have been equalized in certain areas, and the process is going forward in many others. There is a certain amount of hedging and dodging, of course, but ultimate equalization is inevitable, as it should be.

North Carolina was the first state to move toward equalization of salaries for white and Negro teachers where the work done is of the same character, and when training and years of service are identical. At the legislative session of 1939, before the Supreme Court handed down its salary equalization decision, a total of \$258,000 was appropriated for the purpose. The legislature of 1941 arranged to disburse \$250,000 a year during the ensuing biennium for the same cause. This placed North Carolina far in advance of any other Southern state in its efforts to solve the problem. At the end of five years, it is hoped that full equalization will be obtained.

Alabama took a significant step toward the same objective at its legislative session of 1941, when an identical salary scale was announced for both races and some \$200,000 was voted for equalization. While salaries there have not, of course, been equalized by this single appropriation, the allotment of any substantial amount to such a purpose in a state in the Far South is important. Critics of the plan pointed to the declaration of Alabama's superintendent of education that, while the new scale lowered

the minimum for white teachers, none of the whites who were getting the previous \$50 minimum would have their salaries reduced. The N. A. A. C. P. contended that it would 'cost the state of Alabama \$2,000,000 to equalize salaries perfectly,' so that by allocating \$200,000 'Alabama has gone only one-tenth of the way toward equalization.' It also declared that, under the new scale, 'there is still a wide difference between a Negro teacher, for example, who has a master's degree and five years of experience, and a white teacher who has a master's degree and five years of experience.' It went on to say that the Negro teachers of the state were contemplating 'court action at the proper time to secure complete equalization.'

At all events, this Gulf state, with its large Negro population and its deeply ingrained racial cleavage, has taken a step which a few years ago would have seemed impossible. Similar steps are being taken in other Southern states and cities, although they have it within their power to force the N. A. A. C. P. to carry each of their cases all the way up to the Supreme Court. But since the decision there would in every instance be inevitably against them, such obstructionist tactics do not seem to be in contemplation. The prevailing sentiment was expressed by Frederick Sullens, editor of the Jackson *Daily News*, when he took to task Mississippi educators who met, as he put it editorially, 'to avoid the issue and to keep out of the press all that was said on the subject.' His editorial contained the following pungent and incisive comment: —

It isn't any use, gentlemen.

Present manner of distributing the common school fund is a lie and a fraud on its face. It is not equitable and you know it.

Further subterfuge or camouflage will be useless.

The nation's tribunal of last resort has spoken on the subject.

Whether you like the decision or not doesn't matter. It must be obeyed.

Most Southern states have made no definite provision, as yet, for the Negro teachers, but such cities as Louisville, Norfolk, and Chattanooga have put into effect single salary scales for both white and colored, and suits or petitions on behalf of the Negro group have been filed in several others. While it will be years before complete salary equalization is achieved, the movement is gathering momentum.

Just as there have been, and still are, wide discrepancies between the salaries of white and colored teachers, so the per capita expenditures of the various Southern states for school buildings and equipment, and for transportation, are far higher for the whites. One-room and one-teacher Negro schools are numerous in the rural South, and transportation, when furnished, is usually inadequate. Beulah Amidon wrote in the *Survey Graphic* recently that 'in the eleven Southern states which have the highest percentage of Negro citizens Negro youth receives only 37 per cent of the amount which would be allocated for his education were school funds equally divided between white and Negro children,' 'more than 60 per cent of all Negro schools are one-teacher schools,' and 'in 230 counties, in fifteen Southern states, there are no high schools for Negro youth.'

Such a statement leaves a good many things unsaid, however. Here is a race only a couple of generations removed from slavery, whose education became the responsibility of a conquered and looted people. Although that people had wholly inadequate funds with which to finance even one satisfactory system of public schools, it was saddled with the staggering extra burden of a dual system. One finds scant reason for believing that the people of the North or the West would have acquitted themselves any more handsomely, under like circumstances. Moreover, those regions today, with a relatively negligible Negro population, do not have the double load of

a dual system of education, and they have the added advantage of being wealthier than the South to start with. Recent estimates by the National Bureau of Economic Research of the annual income per child for the various states show an average of \$2481 for the country as a whole, with the Southern states ranging from a low of \$930 to a high of \$1528. And although the South spends a larger percentage of its wealth on education than any other region, per pupil expenditures for public education run from a low of \$25 to a high of \$55, against an average of \$74 for the United States as a whole. There would be a smaller discrepancy between the regions, were it not for the fact that in addition to its other handicaps the South has much the largest number of children, per adult, in the nation.

Confronted by such basic and well-nigh insurmountable disadvantages as these, the South naturally encounters extreme difficulty in its efforts to offer educational facilities comparable in excellence to those in wealthier states with only one public-school system and proportionately fewer children. It has been widely suggested that the only satisfactory solution lies in Federal aid, apportioned in accordance with a formula which would provide some assistance to every state but would channel most of this Federal money into the school systems of the predominantly rural South and West. In justification it is argued that the needs of the Southern and Western states are greatest and their financial ability least. Legislation designed to carry out such a plan has been pending in Congress for some time. Thus far it has failed of enactment largely because of opposition from those who feel that the Federal treasury and the Federal taxpayers are being subjected to too great a strain already, and from those who fear the plan would lead to Federal control of the schools, or who regret that it would give no aid to parochial and other non-public education. There are

even persons who profess to anticipate Federal edicts forcing the South to operate a unified public-school system for white and colored, if the bill passes; but, since the late Pat Harrison of Mississippi was the Senate patron of the bill, it is impossible to take this apocalyptic vision seriously.

Dean C. H. Bynum of Texas College is one of those who see no alternative to Federal aid if the South is to bring its public schools up to minimum national standards. He writes in the *Southern Frontier* that in order for the region to reach the national level 'it would have to apply practically its total income from all sources to this objective.' Dean Bynum's 'South' includes eighteen states, and he says that in a most favorable year the total taxable resources of those states 'would yield approximately one billion dollars, nine hundred million of which would have to be allocated to the support of schools, which would then reach only the minimum average of the nation.'

In the light of this summation, it becomes altogether obvious that the unaided South cannot hope to develop public schools for either race which are equal in every respect to those in the rest of the country. Abolition of the dual school system would bring the objective much nearer realization, but it may as well be stated that the South has no intention now, or at any time in the measurable future, of seeking economies by the education of both races in the same public schools.

II

Several large foundations have rendered invaluable assistance in raising the level of Southern Negro schools. Without the philanthropic and altruistic services of these organizations, the schools in question would be considerably less adequate than they are. But the South cannot count on these foundations for unlimited assistance in the future. The two largest and most important, the Julius Rosenwald Fund and the General

Education Board, have arranged to expend all their assets and to close out their activities in a comparatively few years. The former has made possible the erection of 5357 modern school buildings for Negroes in fifteen states, has greatly stimulated better libraries for the colored schools, and has initiated special studies in the field of rural Negro education. The latter has concentrated to a greater degree in the field of the higher learning, but it has given substantial aid to Southern state departments of education, which administer the public-school systems of both races.

In addition to these two foundations, there are others with smaller resources which have rendered important aid to the Negro schools over a long period. For example the \$1,000,000 Jeanes Foundation, established in 1907 by a Philadelphia Quaker, still helps in the maintenance of Jeanes supervisors for those schools in 430 Southern counties. The \$1,000,000 Slater Fund, established in 1882 by a Connecticut manufacturer, still aids in the development of central county training schools in Southern regions where secondary schools are lacking. The \$1,000,000 Phelps-Stokes Fund, established in 1911, continues to sponsor studies and surveys of Negro education.

With the demise of the Rosenwald Fund scheduled to take place not later than 1957, in accordance with the stipulation of its founder, and the liquidation of the General Education Board's assets arranged for a much earlier date, it can readily be seen that the substantial aid which Negro education in the South has received from Northern philanthropists is to be much reduced ere long. This condition arises just when the Southern states are faced with the necessity of finding millions of dollars for Negro schools and colleges in order to comply with recent Supreme Court decisions.

So large a sum of additional money probably would not be raised by taxation within the South today, even if everybody in the region was desirous of pro-

viding both races with completely adequate educational facilities — and there is still strong opposition to placing the public schools of the blacks on a parity with those of the whites. The interracial tension occasioned in Memphis and Dallas during 1941 — which began in Memphis when Negroes voted contrary to orders from the local ‘machine,’ and in Dallas brought bombings and threats of bloodshed when Negroes purchased homes in a section partially occupied by whites — is symptomatic of the feeling in some parts of the South. Since the latest Gallup poll shows that only half of the Southern whites are amenable to the idea of equal school facilities for the blacks, the power of the opposition can be readily imagined. Moreover, there are Negrophobes in high places, like Governor Talmadge of Georgia, who can stoop to the lowest forms of demagoguery to make political capital out of the race issue. Talmadge even vetoed an appropriation voted almost unanimously by the Georgia Legislature in 1941 for the operation of a training school for delinquent Negro girls. The building had been paid for with the nickels and dimes of Georgia’s Negro women, and had been presented by them to the state four years before. It had never been opened, for lack of funds — and doubtless won’t be, as long as Georgia sends Talmadges to the gubernatorial mansion, although Georgia has a training school for delinquent Negro boys. So has every other Southern state except Mississippi, which has practically as many Negroes as whites, but no training school for either delinquent colored boys or delinquent colored girls.

In view of present trends, it seems merely a question of time before such institutions are provided in every Southern state. Meanwhile attention is focused upon the equalization of salaries in the public schools and the efforts of Negroes to secure graduate and professional instruction at Southern universities which hitherto have been re-

served exclusively for whites. These efforts were being pushed with greater vigor by the N. A. A. C. P. in 1939 and 1940, immediately following the Supreme Court’s decision in the Gaines case, than they were early in 1942. That organization appears more interested at the moment in the matter of teachers’ salaries. However, the sundering issue which revolves about the possible admittance of Negroes to the white universities is the most controversial and challenging of all the interracial questions now pressing for a solution. Although, as stated by Edwin Camp of the *Atlanta Journal*, leaders of both races throughout the South are working together on the problem ‘with a singleness of purpose and a tolerant understanding and sympathy which would have seemed impossible a decade ago,’ there are many potential areas of conflict.

The Supreme Court held in the Gaines case, which involved the attempt of a Missouri Negro to enter the University of Missouri Law School, that ‘the state was bound to furnish him within its borders facilities for legal education substantially equal to those which the state then afforded for persons of the white race.’ The phrase ‘within its borders’ appeared to preclude the establishment of regional institutions offering graduate and professional instruction exclusively for Negroes, although the number of Negroes desiring such instruction in any single Southern state is so small at this time as to make the maintenance by each state of separate but ‘equal’ law, medical, engineering, and graduate schools prohibitively expensive, if not ridiculously extravagant.

Several possibilities seemed to present themselves. There was, of course, the ‘solution’ to be arrived at by opening all state-supported institutions to members of the Negro race. There was the second possibility, realizable through the establishment of separate institutions which would offer graduate and professional instruction to Negroes or the enlarge-

ment of existing state-supported undergraduate institutions. Another proposal was that separate schools for Negroes be set up within the white universities. A fourth alternative called for making state aid available to strong private Negro colleges, thus enabling them to provide first-class graduate and professional training. President Harmon W. Caldwell of the University of Georgia presented these alternatives to the annual Southern University Conference in Atlanta in 1939, without clearly indicating his preference. He made it plain that he did not favor admitting Negroes to the white institutions, and declared that the 'fourth possibility should make a particularly strong appeal to states like Georgia, with its Atlanta University Center, and Tennessee with Fisk University.' He seemed to regard a fifth plan as the best of all — namely, establishment of regional institutions supported jointly by the various states, but he doubted if such a scheme would be countenanced by the Supreme Court. He did not mention still another alternative, likewise deemed to be in conflict with the Gaines decision — that is, the granting of tuition subsidies by Southern states to Negroes, so that they might attend Northern professional and graduate schools. This plan still is functioning in a number of Southern states, apparently as a temporary stopgap.

Dr. Jackson Davis of the General Education Board followed President Caldwell on the program. He warned against 'hasty action along the line of least resistance,' and added: —

Most of us who did graduate work in Northern universities attended some classes in which there were a few Negro students. The experience didn't do us any harm. I never heard of a Southern white student objecting to the presence of students of other races. Their presence is assumed in the great centres of learning, which should be open to the elect of all races. These are mature students working in advanced fields.

I have sometimes been asked when Negro

students would be admitted into the graduate and professional schools of Southern universities. My answer has been that it might occur when those universities became primarily graduate institutions rather than undergraduate institutions. When the same set of circumstances prevails in some Southern institutions that now prevails in some of the Northern universities, with more mature students, we have no reason to think that they will react differently.

Dr. Davis is, of course, a much more advanced thinker in the sphere of race relations than the average Southerner. Moreover, it will be many years before any Southern university is properly describable as primarily a graduate institution, so that even he does not regard the present as a propitious time for the admission of Negroes to white universities. Certainly the overwhelming majority of white Southerners are opposed to this, and it seems safe to say that if it were tried in any of the former Confederate states trouble of one sort or another could easily result. This trouble might be relatively mild, or it might be severe. It could take the form of persecution of Negroes on a wide scale throughout the state into whose university one or more Negroes had forced themselves by court action. In other words, hundreds if not thousands of Negroes might be made to suffer in order that one or two might exercise their undoubted legal right to the same grade of graduate and professional training as is provided for white citizens. The danger probably would lie not so much in the possibility of overt acts on the part of the white students with whom the Negro students would be thrown into contact in the classroom as in the attitude of the uneducated 'poor whites' in the remoter sections, who would be likely to register extreme resentment over 'uppity niggers' going to the white university and enjoying schooling which they themselves were utterly incapable of absorbing.

Would a handful of Negro students registered at a Southern university for

whites be apt to find themselves in congenial surroundings? It seems highly doubtful. They probably would suffer no violence, but they would almost certainly be happier at an all-Negro institution providing work of equal excellence. Evidence of this is seen in the fact that 42 per cent of the student body at Fisk University, Nashville, comes from the North, and evidently prefers the homogeneity of the Fisk all-Negro student body to the mixed student bodies available to them in their home states. Moreover, about one fourth of these Northern Negroes remain in the South after graduation.

Consider also the experience of the United States Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy. The former institution has admitted Negroes since 1870, but only nineteen of that race have entered during the nearly three quarters of a century that the institution has been open to them. Of that number, exactly four had been graduated down to 1941. The experience at Annapolis has been the same, only more so. Three Negroes entered the academy there between 1872 and 1941. Not one completed the course.

The analogy between a military or naval academy, where cadets or midshipmen are thrown into intimate contact in barracks and mess halls as well as in the classroom, and a Southern university, where the only contact would be in the classroom, is not exact, of course. Yet the opposition in Southern communities and on Southern campuses to mingling the races in the same educational establishment would be apt to bring similarly unsatisfactory results. While the risk would be less serious in the upper tier of Southern states, it would be substantial in those along the Gulf. In fact, the Gulf states would not be apt to accept a system of mixed education, despite the mandate of the Supreme Court. Ways would be found to circumvent that mandate, or to render the sojourn of any Negro student in a

Far Southern state university so unpleasant that the arrangement would prove unworkable. In other words, even if a few Negroes were accepted willingly in, say, the University of Kentucky or the University of North Carolina, and no trouble of any sort ensued, the system would not function equally well throughout the region, and some other plan would have to be devised for most of the states and institutions concerned.

III

As a matter of fact, the University of North Carolina, the most liberal Southern university in the field of race relations, has recognized already that admission of Negroes to its graduate and professional schools would be contrary to the institution's best interests — perhaps contrary to the Negro's best interests. It has opened a separate law school at the State College for Negroes at Durham, an institution which draws to some extent upon the Chapel Hill and Duke faculties, and is able to use the libraries of those two institutions. Yet its graduate and professional facilities are limited, and adequate financing of those facilities by appropriation from the state treasury would impose an impossible burden of expense.

How much more economical and effective it would be for North Carolina to join with several other Southern states in maintaining the very best grade of graduate and professional instruction at some centrally located point, perhaps at a well-established Negro college or university. Such a regional institution would be adequately financed, in contrast to the school now functioning at Durham, and would be large enough to justify the building of a faculty of the highest class. The expensive laboratories, libraries, and other equipment required would be much more readily secured under such circumstances. The only major obstacle to such a plan is that the Supreme Court might refuse to sanction it.

There is no question that many of the most enlightened students of the race problem, both North and South, regard the establishment of regional institutions exclusively for Negroes as wiser, under existing circumstances, than the mingling of white and colored students on campuses hitherto reserved for whites. Dr. Edwin R. Embree, whose work as director of the Rosenwald Fund has given him an unexcelled opportunity to judge this problem on the basis of the best solution for all concerned, wrote in 1940: —

Graduate and professional education for Negroes is now becoming an increasingly acute question. . . . Southern states must open their regular universities to Negroes (which has been done in certain instances in professional offerings in the border states of Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia, but which probably will not be done for many years in the states further South) or provide courses in state colleges for Negroes parallel to those provided in the state institutions for the rest of the population. . . . An interesting suggestion is that several Southern states pool their educational offerings at strong regional centres. . . . If some plan can be worked out for interstate coöperation, the important universities, especially at Washington, Atlanta, and Nashville, might begin to develop work of highest standard in advanced studies and in preparation for the professions. This would seem a wiser course than dissipating the relatively small funds available to Southern states over a series of 'universities' — pretentious but shabby.

Dr. Guy B. Johnson of the University of North Carolina declared in 1937, the year before the Gaines decision was handed down, that a system of regional subsidy probably would best meet the need of Southern Negroes for advanced instruction. He proposed that established Negro universities serve as centres of graduate work. Dr. Walter D. Cocking of the University of Georgia suggested in a formal report, a few weeks before the Gaines case was decided, that Georgia Negroes be given graduate and professional schooling in regional centres.

Dr. Fred McCuistion, then of George Peabody College for Teachers and now the General Education Board's field agent for Southern education, wrote in 1939, apropos of the Gaines decision: 'Since the lack of ability to support adequate programs of graduate and professional instruction is reflected in statements of taxable wealth of the Southern states, and since there is a limited need for advanced work in certain fields, a larger unit of support for centrally located institutions serving a wider area would be justified.'

Such opinions as these are held by many detached observers of the Southern scene. What likelihood is there that the Supreme Court would place its imprimatur upon a coöperative arrangement of this character? We have noted the pessimism of various Southern educators on the subject. Is that pessimism justified?

It is difficult to answer with complete assurance until we have a ruling on the point from the Supreme Court itself, but an opinion from one of the country's most distinguished constitutional lawyers, a man whose general point of view coincides with that of the majority of the present court and who has been mentioned frequently during the Roosevelt Administration as a likely appointee to that tribunal, is highly significant. This opinion as to the legality of regional institutions for Negroes in the South comes from Dr. Edward S. Corwin of Princeton University, and is here presented for the first time. Dr. Corwin says: —

I base my opinion that a regional university for Negroes in the South would be constitutional on three considerations: —

1. That what a state can do for itself it can — at least there is nothing to the contrary — do in association with other states by means of a compact to which Congress has given its consent.

2. That in giving its consent to such a compact Congress would not only exercise its powers under Article 1, Section 10, but also its powers under the 5th section of the 14th Amendment.

3. That the court, recognizing that the states could provide much better education in the manner suggested than they could individually, would certainly sustain such a compact.

In view of the confidence with which Dr. Corwin expresses himself on this subject, it seems reasonable to assume that, if Congress will authorize the procedure, regional institutions can be established constitutionally through joint action of the various states. Would the necessary authorization be granted by the national legislature? Much might depend upon the attitude of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which was instrumental in securing the Gaines decision and might seek to block Congressional action. The N.A.A.C.P. has given clear indications in the past of wanting to break down the segregation of the races everywhere. For example, Charles H. Houston, its special counsel, told the association's annual convention in 1939 that nothing would satisfy the N.A.A.C.P. but admission of Negroes to the graduate and professional schools of the Southern state universities. 'There can be no compromise now upon this question,' said Mr. Houston. 'It is not a question of wanting to sit in the classroom with white students. It is a question of vindicating one's citizenship.' Mr. Houston made it plain that establishment of separate, but equal, graduate and professional facilities in a given state would not be considered satisfactory. Applying this principle all along the line, it seems logical to conclude that in 1939 Mr. Houston and the organization for which he spoke intended, at some opportune time, to press for the admission of Negroes to the undergraduate departments of state-supported colleges and universities in the South, in order to 'vindicate' the 'citizenship' of the race, and ultimately to seek the abolition of segregation in the public schools. This was charged publicly at the time, and was never denied.

Whether such plans are entertained

today by the N.A.A.C.P. is unknown, however. We have seen that it has been less aggressive of late in the matter of forcing Negroes into the Southern universities, and it may have decided that so drastic and radical a course would do more harm than good to the Negroes. If a demonstration could be made that great and lasting interracial bitterness would be aroused through insistence by the association upon its legal rights in this sphere, and it could be shown that most of the Negroes' white defenders and well-wishers in the South would be driven into the opposition by such tactics, the organization might modify its position. Indeed, there are indications that it may have done so already.

IV

Americans must admit candidly that the democratic ideal is at war with the thesis that American citizens can be placed in separate pigeonholes and given varying educational and social advantages, depending upon the color of their skins. Any discrimination among citizens of this country for reasons of race or religion is undemocratic. Yet sight must not be lost of the fact that the modern South inherited a problem of tremendous complexity and difficulty at the close of the Civil War. Moreover, if the South is to be blamed for the system of slavery upon which it built its economy and its society prior to that war, what are we to say of the eminent New Englanders who made vast sums out of the uniformly barbarous slave trade? How shall we explain away the fact that slavery was not abolished in New England until it was found to be unprofitable there? Is it not obvious that the factors which created a slave system in the South would have created one in New England if the climate and the agricultural system had been favorable? Let us not forget that William Lloyd Garrison said as late as 1831, following a tour of the country for the purpose of

arousing the people against the slave system, that in the free states, 'and particularly in New England,' he found 'contempt more bitter, opposition more active, detraction more relentless, prejudice more stubborn, and apathy more frozen, than among the slaveowners themselves.'

So much for the attitudes of the respective sections only three decades before the Civil War. After that war was over, the beaten and bankrupt South was saddled with the huge problem of caring for millions of emancipated Negroes. Despite all this, and in the face of the interracial prejudice and acrimony which Reconstruction, so-called, aroused, the South laboriously began the task of providing educational and other facilities for the blacks. Today, remarkable progress has been recorded. In the words of Senator Norris of Nebraska, 'the people of the South have done a wonderful job.' Yet they are criticized severely for maintaining separate educational establishments for the two races, and otherwise seeking to prevent ultimate racial amalgamation. Even in the District of Columbia, in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial, there are separate public-school systems, and the same situation obtains in parts of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. The South, with a population one-third Negro, is trying to solve its far more serious problem on the basis of equal, but separate, establishments from the elementary level on through the graduate and professional school. It should be repeated that even advanced Southern thinkers in the realm of race relations are predominantly of the opinion that, given existing sentiment throughout the region, this is the most feasible and satisfactory plan for all concerned.

The extent to which, in recent years, attention has been focused upon the problem of graduate and professional training for Negroes is evidenced in the following statement made by Dr. Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University in 1939:—

Less than a decade ago the major concern was that of meeting the demand for adequate academic standards in liberal-arts colleges, and the preceding decade that of developing colleges out of the loosely organized institutions just emerging from the high-school level. Today there are no less than twenty institutions which meet the exacting requirements for accreditation as sound liberal-arts colleges, and in the logic of this development the demand has increased for personnel of more mature academic preparation.

It is unfortunate for the Negro graduate and professional schools that they did not attract much attention until after the era of splendid munificence on the part of our philanthropists had passed. Dr. Fred McCuiston points out in his valuable *Graduate Instruction for Negroes in the United States* that there were 171 gifts of \$100,000 or more to American institutions in the year 1928, whereas the number had dropped to 28 by 1935, and to 18 by 1938.

Having begun to develop graduate and professional instruction long after the white institutions, the Negro colleges and universities are, in most instances, unable to compete with them on anything like equal terms. No Negro institution offers the Ph.D. in any subject, and not many give the M.A. or M.S. Practically all were established after 1865, most of them during the last thirty-five years of the nineteenth century. In 1938, a survey showed that of the 999 members of faculties in the 37 colleges rated by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, only 75 were Ph.D.'s. With the exception of two relatively unimportant institutions in Pennsylvania and one in Ohio, all the Negro colleges and universities are in Southern or border states. Hampton Institute in Virginia is the only one with endowment of as much as \$10,000,000, and Tuskegee and the institutions centering in Atlanta and Fisk Universities are the only others with more than \$5,000,000.

TOOLS AND THE HAND

BY WILSON FOLLETT

'Those poor fellows aloft in the freezing blast were working with spanners on nuts . . . they were dealing with great weights and an infinite complexity of gear. . . . I watched them with anguish and admiration, thinking "that is real glory; man is doing nothing finer than that anywhere; it passes un-noticed and the men who are aloft will neither be praised nor thanked; yet what a feat it is." I went home, wondering why the deeds of work are not heeded, while the deeds of sport fill the headlines.' — JOHN MASEFIELD

I

IT is my good fortune to live in a countryside where hand tools still persist for many a use that, in the modern world at large, is more and more relegated to machines. Good hand tools are, for that reason, generally cherished, and the niceties of their idiom well understood by old and young. The explanation of this regional conservatism — lag, a sociologist would call it — is that our characteristic transactions are on a small, highly individualized scale, the scale of the hundred-acre or 'one-man' dairy farm, without the possible margin of profit that would support such overhead as mechanization always involves.

When one of our framed barns needs a ten-by-twelve structural timber replaced, there can be no question of inviting some town contractor to put in a stick from Georgia or Oregon, already saddled with the tolls of a unionized lumber crew, power dragsaws, caterpillar tractors, a sawmill, a long haul by railroad or freighter, several short hauls by truck, and four selling profits. Instead, some old fellow, very likely nearer eighty than seventy, goes into the wood lot with measurements penciled on a spruce chip in his overalls pocket, picks his hemlock, drops it with the aid of a boy on the other end of the crosscut saw (which he has filed and set himself), trims the

trunk, with adz or broadaxe hews it to shape where it lies, works the mortises in it with auger and chisel, 'twitches' (i.e., hauls) it with the farm's yoked oxen or team of horses, and finally — with the aid of building jacks and perhaps an ingenious arrangement of tackle in lieu of the many hands that make light work — 'slips it in.' (That piece of understatement is the only locution ever heard from our one-man contractors for an operation that demands the utmost niceties of engineering skill; an operation in which everything must be exactly right from beginning to end if the whole is not to be exactly wrong.)

When that old fellow's lifework is done the past beneficiaries of it gather at the auction and compete for the tools with which he did it; and the result, always a little mystifying to city visitors who have come on the chance of picking up antiques, is that these tools fetch a good deal more than they cost him new. The bids are not made primarily *in memoriam*, out of sentimental piety. What coaxes the dollars out of our tight-buttoned pockets is the belief that we are buying some residue of the merit that was worked into the tools by the hands that laid them down.

And that is a perfectly true belief. For the relation between man and tool

is a reciprocal one. The well-designed tool will subtly train and reëducate the hand that uses it, but hardly more than the hand in its turn will modify the tool. The quality of workmanship seems to impress itself upon the substance of cold steel, gradually improving or impairing its constitution. Some obscure kind of polarization or ionization seems gradually to take place in the very particles of the cutting edge, until its temper is matched to the temperament of the user. This phenomenon, indefinable but observable, explains why every skilled hand worker possesses at least a few cutting tools that he will lend only with great reluctance — tools that no silent borrower can help himself to without the owner's knowing it the moment he starts to use them again. It also explains why he insists upon sharpening his tools himself. Such a workman, when at last his eyesight becomes too impaired to trust, will keep his edged tools in shape by a delicate combination of touch and the sound of contact with grindstone or oilstone or file. Experience has taught him that the apparently keener edge produced by someone else will not hold up under his kind of stroke. It is harder to grind a tool to another's muscular habits than to perceive a match flame in bright sunshine.

This whole fine interaction between implement and man is experienced in a typical enough way by anyone who has learned to use a grass scythe with moderate proficiency. It is possible, of course, to pick up the rudiments of the swing and of the all-important footwork by studying someone who is, as we say, 'a good man on the crooked stick.' But every learner finds that the real niceties of scything, the differences between a feat of main strength and an effortless art, are taught by the crooked stick itself — its balance, the adjustment of the handles to his own height, the distribution of weight and leverage between snath and blade. Submit yourself to the genius of the implement, and it

swings itself and you, like the enchanted broom of the sorcerer's apprentice. There you have the tool as teacher. You meet the tool as pupil when you undertake to grind a blade that someone else has been grinding for his own use. The first edge you put on it may gladden your critical eye and fill you with pride, but after a few minutes' scything you will think the grass is fence wire. The other fellow has ground his different personality into it; it has become tuned to his habit, his touch. You will have to put it through all of three or four sharpenings to make it yours.

The complete woodsman makes acquaintance with a brand-new axe — and what a calamity he makes of having ever to get one! — by putting it, directly after helving, on the grindstone. He does this, not to make it sharper, but to familiarize himself with its temper and to work out any warp in the metal or inequality between its sides. On an occasion when time pressed I saw such a woodsman forgo this initial process of teaching his blade something of himself while learning something of it; and his second stroke, which had to go through a hemlock knot charged with frost, took out a half-moon of steel that included a good third of one cutting edge. (It was a double-bitted axe.) He looked at it mournfully and said: 'I *knew* I ought to have ground it. I mistrusted the two sides weren't even. They almost never are.' His self-punishment was drastic, even for his kind of rugged moralist. He made himself use the other edge for two winters after that one.

Kitchen utensils, too, I hear it testified, receive in the course of time an impress that makes them invaluable and irreplaceable. A giver of loaves who cooks with a locally famous versatility and originality — also with incredible ease — makes daily use of tools from two gifted cooks of other generations, one born in 1838, one in 1859. She avers that one of the old mixing spoons, with bowl worn down to the shape of the gibbous

moon and maple handle lathe-turned with a sculptor's regard for the nature of the human hand, can impart more about the knack of beating cake batter than all the teachers of cookery in all the seminaries. When she tries to make shift with one of its modern counterparts she finds that the new handle was designed for the eye only, or perhaps for the convenience of automatic machinery; until she can get someone to whittle half the wood out of it and sandpaper it to the contour of the old one it cramps her hand and presently lames it.

The proverb about the new broom that sweeps clean may have been true when it was coined, but it is hopelessly false of today's brooms, which never sweep clean until taught to by discipline and much wear.

There is, in short, no tool like an old tool.

II

A chronic distress of the latter-day Jack-of-all-trades — and he still exists in legions — is the dearth of small hand tools fit to replace the old ones when they are finally worn out or ground away. More and more he has to depend on implements with so little character of their own that they will take no impress from his, or so short-lived that they have to be thrown away before he can get them broken in. This deficiency of an age teeming with improvements is the more maddening because it exists side by side with very remarkable advances in the science of metallurgy. But hardly anyone finds it to his advantage in these days to make and sell small things except in great volume; everything seems to be sacrificed to 'turnover,' to 'repeat orders.' The result is that instruments once bought for a lifetime are now bought for a year, and those once good for a year have to be replaced for the single job. Whence the needle that (unless you can get it from England) will not sew, the razor blade that will not shave, the carving knife that will only

haggle, and the new half-inch bitt that bends under a pressure not quite sufficient to make it penetrate. Whence, too, the replacement of the water-cooled grindstone with a geared, high-speed bench grinder that removes twenty times the metal it ought and burns the temper out of what is left. Whence, finally, a national junk pile that is bound to be one of the future wonders of archaeology; it has already created a well-nigh insoluble problem of disposal, and at a time when everyone concerned with the military defense of the nation is having nightmares over threatened shortages of essential metals.

Consider the trifling matter of files — which is not so trifling if you reflect that every kind of wood saw in the world, whether operated by hand or by power, whether used for lumber or for fuel, is constantly dependent on files for its maintenance in service. My wagon-building grandfather, who renewed a lot of saws between 1860 and 1910, used to keep a running biography of every file he used. It was in the form of notches on the wooden handle, one notch for every saw filed. The handle was always uncommonly large — he had turned it on his own lathe to fit his own hand — and the notches were so fine and close that to count them was a test of eyesight. For the best files of that period the notches ran all the way down one side of the handle, around the end, all the way up the other side, and part way down on a second circuit. The occasional file that took him only half or two-thirds of the way down the first side was a 'bad one'; it left him disgusted and nursing a grievance. The proportion of bad ones, he noticed, was greatly on the increase toward the end of his working life. Today, after all our discoveries in technology and in the face of national advertising in which the file manufacturers claim scientifically rigid standardization and make almost religious protestations about keeping faith with the public, any man who takes care of his own saws

would gladly pay a fivefold price for the worst 'bad one' my grandfather ever laid eyes on.

The moral seems fairly plain. For every improvement in the collective, machine-turned, mass-producing aspects of workmanship we have paid something out of the individual, hand-turned, made-to-order aspects. The questions in my mind are such as these: Can we afford this price? Do we really have to pay it? In the long run does not industry itself need, as a permanent part of the national background and atmosphere, the man who can turn his hand to anything and whose animating ideal is the best work he can do with the best tools he can get? In the end can any number of factory inspections, however rigid, be a competent substitute for the all-round artisan's self-judgment — for individual conscience? Is it truly a good thing for the future of American housebuilding, furniture, shipbuilding, aircraft, dynamos, radio sets, tractors, textile machinery, ordnance, and so on, that we should ask the amateur mechanic, the Jack-of-all-trades, the farmer and his boy, to make shift with screwdrivers that turn in their handles, planes with adjustment screws that cross-thread after a few turns, and cutting tools that, if they will accept an edge at all, will not hold it? Can we suppose for a minute that these two things have nothing to do with each other, and that we can bypass integrity in the small affairs and yet collect its benefits in the great ones?

In lieu of undertaking direct answers to these questions I will cite two representative circumstances that have, for those who want to see it, a bearing on the answers: —

(1) The personnel executives of industries under a necessity of rapid expansion in the interest of national defense have taken to assuring us almost with one voice that their mainstay among the hordes of new learners is the youngster from the farm — the boy who has grown up with assorted tools, done miscel-

laneous tinkering from as far back as he can remember, and rooted himself in the habit of taking every difficulty as an invitation to his faculty of contrivance.

(2) The officers of a military engineering detachment consider under official instruction the problem of replacing quickly a bombed bridge over a small river with heavily forested banks. The first thing they are taught is that the time has gone by when it could be expected that a regiment of the United States Army would include enough able axemen to supply the makings of such a bridge from timber felled on the spot. Their best procedure will be, if you please, to demolish some sound building in the vicinity, say a ruggedly framed barn, and haul its girders to the site.

Maybe the axemanship is really not there any more; maybe it is still there and the military higher-ups can't believe it or find it. The truth must be one or the other. Either seems deeply shocking. Also, it brings up the interesting question how far a nation can get toward the winning of a war or any other crucial struggle of the present by trading on its past virtue — the virtue, say, of those excellent hewers of wood, our grandfathers.

III

There are, to be sure, a good many Americans who refuse to be at all shocked by evidences that all-round manual competence is on the wane. As a rule they are the ones whose acquaintance with hand tools is restricted to implements designed for propelling a ball or landing a game fish. Their very definition of progress is the conquest of nature, the conquest of leisure. In the fact that machines increase while hand tools diminish they read the news that sweat and blisters and fatigue become all the time less necessary to the conduct of the world's work; and, unable to conceive that any rational person will coarsen his body with avoidable toil, they find this news worth celebrating. In every laborer

who takes off his overalls, in every process that is translated from a pick-and-shovel basis to the pushing of buttons, the adjustment of levers, and the reading of dials, they perceive a net gain for civilization.

With all respect for Mr. Stuart Chase and other panegyrists of the power age, the labor-saving device, I believe they are rushing the pace of evolution and ignoring some deep, permanent needs of the animal man. We happen to be pretty effective machines ourselves, and it is self-evident from the way we are constituted that these machines are designed to do work. They have to do it to keep in what is significantly called 'working order.' The unworked body starves for work as the unfed body starves for food. One proof is the gratuitous rigors undertaken to get Mount Everest climbed or a mile run one-fifth of a second faster. Proof of a left-handed sort is also discoverable in the woman of the all-electric, completely mechanized ultramodern kitchen, who finds herself with the leisure to contract a fine assortment of the new nervous and psychic diseases while standing around waiting for automatic appliances to do their stuff.

What is forgotten or conveniently ignored by those who are always bemoaning the foot-pounds of energy wasted by walking upstairs or lifting a flatiron or hand-feeding a steam boiler is the simple primary fact that *we have the energy*. Our only conspicuous modern way of wasting energy is by not using it. The sedentary American is notoriously losing his teeth on a labor-saving diet, his legs and his lungs on labor-saving developments in transportation; and the medicos who look him over in great numbers in connection with military service find a deplorable recent softening of his whole body, significantly accompanied by losses of mental toughness and elasticity. We congratulate each other on the release from tools and toil, lapse into a lopsided life that is bound to

result in jumpy nerves and jangled wits, and then try to cure each other's ills by psychiatric methods, when all that is needed

. . . is not to sit still

Or frowst with a book by the fire;

But to take a large hoe and a shovel also,

And dig till you gently perspire.

What the times call for is another *Past and Present*, a new Carlyle's new affirmation of the dignity of labor — real, regular labor that uses the body for what it is good for and tires it enough to teach it what a supreme luxury is earned rest.

However, no one outside of a few faddists and fanatics can seriously be expected to pray for the daily bread of hard labor just because he knows it is indispensable to a balanced diet. The real argument for a pick-and-shovel technique of living is not the therapeutic one, but the very argument commonly urged in favor of the machine-and-kilowatt technique: to wit, the argument from efficiency. For there is more than one kind of efficiency, and nearly every enhancement of one kind is at the expense of some other. In agriculture, for instance, a corporal's guard with machinery can produce the tonnage of food that would require, with hand methods, an army — but *not on the same acreage*. To save man-hours that we think important we waste land that we think unimportant. Let the density of population pass a certain point and you arrive at a reversal of values, of necessities. A thousand back-yard garden plots worked by a thousand men with hoes will then be incomparably more efficient than their combined area tractor-worked as a unit by a small crew.

Some days ago, with my two favorite implements of destruction, axe and bush scythe, I tore into a partly swampy corner of land that, as I found by the tree rings, had been neglected for some twenty years. It is potentially a fine calf pasture — which, indeed, it had been a generation ago, on the affidavit of rotted posts and rusted wire. Now,

the 'efficient' way to reclaim this corner was to pick a morning of exactly the right conditions and burn it out — the same 'efficient' method our hard-pressed forefathers used on a hundred years' supply of the fifty-inch pines that would be worth almost anything to us if we had them today. Well, it happens that my household had long sighed to have a tamarack growing within sight of the buildings. There had been but one such of any size, and that had been felled by the Big Blow of 1938. Inching my way into this jungle by the laborious method of clearing a few square rods at a time and piling the brush, I soon came upon a perfect young thirty-foot tamarack at the centre of a clump of scrub pines, where no one would ever have seen it if I had efficiently summoned fire to do my work for me.

Saving that tree to flourish in the open and become more beloved with every season and every inch of its growth — that seems incomparably more important than the alternative saving of myself, my hours and strength; more important to more persons, and for a far longer time.

IV

And then, when we elect to save ourselves there is always the pertinent, usually unanswerable question, What for?

The man who discreetly thins a wood lot and turns the surplus trees into firewood has the inestimable advantage of knowing perfectly well that in a variety of small ways he is making the world better. He is improving a bit of forest, whether as future timber or just as present trees. He is creating comfort out of nature's waste. He is building up his own bodily strength and skill. He is having a good time; for virtually all such work is done by men who love it. And, following a practice as cordially approved by every department of local and national government as by his own common sense, he is basking in the good

conscience of the good citizen. Imagine that by buying his fuel he saves his time for such white-collar pursuits as are supposed to be worth saving it for — specifically, the mental pursuits, such as participating in refined converse with his fellow time-savers on what the world is coming to, or plaguing his mind about what other people ought to do to be saved, or inventing one more labor-saving contrivance, or reading the *Critique of Pure Reason*, or shaping this essay. Can he then enjoy anything like the same assurance that his use of time will make the world better?

The work of our hands being so self-evidently good so much of the time, and that of our heads generally so dubious even when it is not palpably indifferent or bad, it seems rather wonderful that any creature should have the hardihood to stake the whole meaning of his existence on brain work alone.

Abroad in the land spreads a strange assumption that there is something peculiarly, preëminently cultural in leisure and its fruits — in superior articulation, the wider diffusion of luxuries and refinements, the release of the mind from practical exigencies, the resulting appetite for generalizations and abstractions, the quest of amusement, and above all the dedication of more and more individuals to art and science and theoretic reflection. But culture, by any definition worth talking about, is the whole sum of a people's arts of living; and of these its necessary work is by all odds the greatest item. Culture is not ornament: it is workmanship, which is integrity. Any man who looks down upon himself or another as a disinherited expatriate from culture because he has to work with his hands instead of his head is truly to be pitied, but not for the reason he imagines. He has already shown that he has little head to work with.

What in the world was ever more integral with the deepest meanings of culture than the conception, the evolution, the canon and tradition, of any basic tool?

Consider, for example, what a profoundly, thrillingly original deed of the mind, what a really epic feat of synthesis, was performed by the unsung inventor to whom it first occurred to put the knife, the wedge, and the sledgehammer together into the one tool that we call the axe. It is a simple-seeming tool — now that we have it; its existence is what we glibly call inevitable; not to have it is, for us, unthinkable. But imagine your way back, back, and back into that shadowy prehistoric time before any living being had conceived the possibility. Does its existence seem one of the inevitable things *now*? Is it not, rather, one of the miraculous things? From a point an hour or an instant before it has come into the world can you regard it as a simple tool? Is it not the having, it at all that has suddenly become almost unthinkable?

From this point grope your way forward and forward again and survey a little of what this axe has done in human history — the difference it has made to man's environment and hence to man, the part it has played in his taming of the wild, the probabilities of where he would find himself today without it. As an incorporation of sheer mind-stuff the invention of gunpowder is not to be compared with it, for that was accident. As a determining factor in man's tenancy of his habitat throughout the ages, gunpowder with all its extensions and applications may be trivial beside the axe, though it seem otherwise at certain violent hours of history. In relatively modern times and on our own continent some other unsung genius of cultural history hits upon the now standard retrocurved helve, and at last the tool is consummated, its dynamic efficiency instantly doubled by the inspired union of knife, wedge, hammer with the potent principle of the lever. What that the mind has ever been able to accomplish in the realm of abstractions is so difficult or so improbable before the fact, so unarguable a ministry to need, or so

tremendous in its effect upon the life of the race? Yet there are those who take such things for granted and patronize them as representing a rudimentary, childish, ignoble cunning.

Nor is this all. The axe is a tool with a very eminent educative and disciplinary power. There is a code for its use, a complicated set of rules and prohibitions enforced by penalties — the same rules and the same penalties for all users everywhere. Axemanship is, in that, not unlike seamanship. A vessel will certainly kill you in the end if you do not handle it just so, and for that reason it must be dealt with by men whose fidelity to its requirements is so trained into them that their training will take automatic hold when they are tottering from fatigue or paralyzed with terror or running a fever. You have to respect the axe just so, or it will admonish you — and about the mildest admonition it knows anything about is an amputated finger. There are half a hundred specific niceties of precaution that you have to observe as inflexible laws. They govern the position of your hands in splitting, that of your feet in chopping or hewing, the way you carry the tool, what you do with it between strokes, the allowances you make for different kinds of wood, for knots, for invisible decay, for hard frost, for wet hands or mittens, for brush, for bystanders.

If a man is a sheer wizard of the axe, he can habitually short-cut some of these laws and perhaps get away with it indefinitely. Almost anybody can temporize with them a little at times when he is fresh and feeling fine and his strokes are going to a split hair where he wants them. But the unwritten law exists to protect the axeman from his own fallibility — from carelessness and the virtuoso's cockiness, from a stumble, from numbing cold and the fatigue that sneaks up like a thief an hour before sunset. The high incidence of missing digits and of lamed and one-armed men in every wooded region says that the

only real surety is to observe the letter of the law always — to behave as if all the conditions were chronically against you. The really finished axeman is distinguished from the novice, not only by his chips, but by the chances he forbids himself ever to take.

For my part, I think it salutary for every mother's son of us to deal with at least one thing that, because he has a wholesome fear of it, will hold him up to this sort of mark. I cannot believe that the moral stature of the race, or even of its best, has as yet quite outgrown the profit of some such self-discipline. Whatever uniformly enforces it for a great number is a cult, which is to say a section of culture. And, in the way of all genuine culture, it is no departmentalized and irrelevant mastery, like a parlor trick, but an impregnation of the whole man, like the grain in wood.

I, for a trifling instance, never pick

up an axe without remembering that it means something to me to keep 'these ten toes upon my hands' because I hope and intend to put in several thousand hours of my declining years playing, or playing at, the sonatas of Beethoven. These also are, if you like, a cult, a discipline, and the bond of a great sodality. What I deplore, not to say resent, is the vapid assumption that such an employment of time and tissue has a cultural significance above or alien to that of the varieties of manual work throughout which I shall, if provident and lucky, have preserved the necessary quota of fingers. What I presume to possess cultural significance is the meaning that Beethoven can have to us from the wood lot, the furrow, and the lathe; likewise the sustenance that at desk or typewriter, easel or keyboard, we draw from the work we have done and store up for the work we have yet to do.

AMERICAN WRITERS COME OF AGE

BY CONRAD AIKEN

I

'It is solely due to the critics, who in our times still praise rude, savage, and, for us, meaningless works of the ancient Greeks: Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus, and especially Aristophanes; or, of modern writers, Dante, Tasso, Milton, Shakespeare; in painting, all of Raphael, all of Michelangelo, including his absurd "Last Judgment"; in music, the whole of Bach, and the whole of Beethoven, including his last period, — thanks only to them have the Ibsens, the Maeterlincks, Verlaines, Mallarmés, Puvis de Chavannes, Klingers, Böcklins, Stucks, Schneiders; in music, the Wagners,

Liszts, Berliozes, Brahmses, and Richard Strausses, etc., and all that immense mass of good-for-nothing imitators of these imitators, become possible in our day.'

Many people will remember how Tolstoy, in that very interesting, very odd, and certainly very misguided book, *What Is Art?* bitterly attacked modern art and letters, practically all of it, as antisocial, immoral, and decadent; and then endeavored to formulate in its stead a quasi-religious doctrine of art of his own, based on 'the brotherly union of man.'

He was writing, of course, at a time which was later to be known, with some opprobrium, as *fin de siècle*; Russia, like the rest of the world, was beginning to react to the multifarious ferment of French romanticism; and Russia, like the rest of the world, must at all costs be defended against this vile and insidious foreign infection. The notion of a 'universal' art was not new, nor did Tolstoy himself succeed in making a more plausible program for it, either as religion or as psychology, than his predecessors. More diverting for us, if only as a cautionary tale for prophets and politicians and literary captains, at a moment when clearheadedness is at a premium, to look over the actual names of that era which were so unreasonably hated by so great a man — not, by any means, that he restricted himself to that era alone. It is a handsome list — indeed, it is magnificent. If it had been Tolstoy's intention to pick out, from among his contemporaries, those names which might *survive*, he could hardly have done better; it is doubtful if it was better done by anyone. And the list of contemporary painters with which he supplemented it was just as startlingly comprehensive. Monet, Manet, Renoir, Sisley, Redon, and Pissarro were condemned out of hand. Had Tolstoy known Cézanne and Van Gogh, we can be sure that they too would have been dismissed.

Taken altogether, this represents what is perhaps an all-time high, a *locus classicus*, of mistaken critical judgment; it remains, like a kind of wrecker's beacon, as a warning to those who would mix sociology and morals with their aesthetics *a priori*. Certainly, one can think of no pronouncement by a writer of comparable stature which contains so many confessions of blindness. But if we can recover from our astonishment at its sheer stupendousness, there is something we can learn from it, particularly at this precise moment in our and the world's history. That war renders a nation violently egoistic is a truism — Tolstoy

himself had something to say about this, and we shall come to it later. Such egoism is inevitable; and it is necessary if a nation is to survive. But it is against its less desirable cultural by-products that we must learn to be on our guard; and it is already possible to see from what directions some of these might come.

One of these, for example, is our old friend, but now wearing a slightly different costume, the Cultural Protective Tariff. Never a very sound practice, but a comforting one, this took the form, during the lean years of our cultural adolescence, when the competition from abroad was too keen, of a kind of double standard in criticism. The critical tariff on imported works of art was kept high — was kept, as it were, up to international standards: an English poet or a French painter was to be judged and measured against the best of the whole present, the whole past. But of the domestic product the critics weren't quite so exacting. It was a little too much to expect, surely, of a nation still expanding, still thrusting forward its frontiers, whether geographical or psychological or industrial, that it should be as richly nourished on tradition or speak with as complex and formed a language (that is, literature) as those parent nations whose pioneering was long since done. And so, our good New England homespun, for instance, was unblushingly, if not indeed a little proudly, compared to foreign damask; and to be unostentatiously provincial was simply to continue those virtues of plain living and high thinking which had been common to the Puritans and — shall we say — the 'better' of the Romans.

All of which was harmless enough, and perhaps in its season even useful, protecting as it did those tenderer shoots which a severer exposure might have killed. But one had thought, and hoped, that this was a thing of the past. Was it not, in fact, finished in 1919-1920? The famous mass migration of our literary expatriates to Europe at the end of the

First World War has by some been taken to signify a lack or weakness in our own 'scene'; and their mass return, a decade later, somewhat bedraggled, as a confession of that weakness in themselves, or an awakening to something in America which they had previously overlooked or ignored.

But this, I think, is to miss the point entirely — and it is a point of paramount importance. For it was precisely at the moment when the American *avant garde* artists were ready and willing to admit that Europe had something to teach them that, culturally, America grew up. This was the exact minute when the cultural protective tariff went down. From now on the American 'scene' was confessedly and functionally to be no longer the isolated and provincial 'independent' show it had always somewhat braggingly been, but a part of the world picture; it was ready for its natural inheritance of the whole tradition of man's past, no matter from what country or what century it might come. This humble migration in search of knowledge (it was our Grand Tour) marked our coming of age. And this modest preparation for a genuine internationalism of the arts was something precious which we must now — above all, now — try to remember and cherish.

Tolstoy's extraordinary blindness to what was excellent and life-giving in contemporary European art had two obvious causes. One of these was mere insularity — unacknowledged, to be sure, but insularity just the same. It was the age-old defensive suspicion of anything that was foreign. But even more blinding to him was his naïve — *morally* naïve — fear of anything that was new. No such good European as Turgenev (that great expatriate), and with no such ordered sense of historical and cultural perspective, Tolstoy was jealous, unconsciously, for Russia's backwardness. Inevitably irritated and perplexed by the rapidity, vehemence, and brilliance

with which European art was advancing and changing, he was too fixed to be willing to understand it, too religious (in his own queer social sense) to have any longer the *capacity* for understanding it; and therefore it must be destroyed. To attack it merely because it was not Russian was impossible for him, even had he been aware that this was one of his motives; for this would have been to fly against his own theory of universal or international art. But he could and did attack it on the ground that it was meaningless, frivolous, and socially irresponsible, — spiritually ugly and hyperæsthetic, — in short for its decadence. Out it must go, every bit of it, lock, stock, and barrel. And not only the moderns, not only Mallarmé and Baudelaire, but Milton, Goethe, and Shakespeare as well. Only *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, like a sort of brave Noah's Ark, was permitted to survive the flood.

II

Two recent books by American critics make one wonder, with some uneasiness, whether we too are not to be treated to some such anachronistic purge: *The Opinions of Oliver Allston*, by Van Wyck Brooks, and *Intellectual America*, by Mr. Oscar Cargill. Mr. Brooks, as we know, and much as we admire him (and indeed we have long been greatly in his debt) is an implacable enemy of the American expatriate and all his works. Was it his own brief taste of the Lotus — at least, the English Lotus — that has embittered him? For one can have little doubt that his judgment of Henry James, and especially of those wonderful 'late' novels, is more than Tolstoyan in its *parti pris* recklessness; nor that the opinions of Oliver Allston, as of his ventriloquist, on Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and James Joyce, to mention only a few, will not one day seem just as surprisingly wrongheaded. As Tolstoy sought his universal, misguidedly, in a kind of lowest common denominator of

the arts which any peasant could grasp — sacrificing at one stroke both the great and the subtle — so Mr. Brooks and Mr. Cargill, with pretty much the same intention, might be described as Two Critics in Search of the Wholesome. Mr. Brooks makes the really startling admission that he prefers *Snow-Bound* to *The Waste Land*; and at this rate it cannot be long before some even bolder champion of the autochthonous will publicly prefer *Little Women* to James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Mr. Cargill, for his part, displays an almost Comstockian zeal in hunting out decadents — he finds decadents everywhere, and tears them to pieces with a relish which looks decidedly suspicious. Evidently, as Gypsy Rose Lee said of men, he 'prefers them monstrous': he likes his decadence 'high.'

But what is interesting, and indeed disturbing, is that both critics, like Tolstoy, single out with a practically unerring eye the best, the most deeply creative writers of our time, not for praise, but for ridicule and dismissal. Mr. Brooks dismisses them as 'escapists' and 'coteries'; Mr. Cargill, with a handful of loose labels, bundles them together more or less indiscriminately and inaccurately as Freudians, Intelligentia, or Decadents: he is a kind of grocer-critic, and weighs 'content' as one might weigh sugar. Both critics betray a marked, though occasionally ambiguous, animus towards modern psychology — towards Freud and the notion of the unconscious in particular; and for both the idea of the 'death-drive,' Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle (which Santayana wittily called 'a long way round to Nirvana'), is, at any rate as embodied in contemporary poetry and fiction, the very last word in defeatism, unwholesomeness, and decay.

Now what is really being proposed here, let us be in no doubt about it, is a moral, or social, intrusion into the world of letters: the world of letters, that is to say, has become a moral peril, and must

be regenerated. And the step that is suggested, at any rate by implication, is that, if we are to recover that most priceless element in a work of art, the *will* (by which is no doubt meant the will to goodness, or the will to wholesomeness), we must begin, as Tolstoy began, by simply shutting the door to pretty much everything else. Above all, now that the world is at war, and when cultural interchange between the nations is so difficult (thus runs a common argument), now is the very time for a complete retreat, a return to our own inexhaustible inner resources, our own beautiful and inviolate regionalism and national purity. Let us therefore close the doors once again on these 'foreign' ideas, these naughty, and alien, and for us so insoluble poisons. In short, let us now be good wholesome Americans and have a good wholesome American art. The time for decadence is past — and it was never really natural to us, anyway.

Leaving aside the somewhat frightening vision of what this 'wholesomeness' would lead us to in literature, — with its prototypical Horatio Algers and Pollyannas, its rural innocence and regional Arcadias, — it is perhaps more useful to take a good look at the notion of 'decadence.' First of all, let us note that decadence is always a relative thing: it is not an absolute, or definable as such, but merely and always a something which follows a something else — a something else to which it is assumed to be inferior. Nor is it quite as simple as that, either — for we must remember that if this decadence follows something, it also precedes something. It is no more an end than it is a beginning: in fact, it is an organic and living part of a constantly changing and evolving continuum. And this continuum is nothing less, in turn, than the whole evolution of man's awareness. Literature, the plastic arts, the sciences — everything comprised in our cultural and intellectual evolution — are these not, insofar as they represent the steady advance in

human awareness, completely identifiable with the evolution of man's 'mind' — his capacity to feel, perceive, and understand?

And has this not been so from the very beginning? The inventors of the first words, the inventors of language — and these were our first poets — were, like the inventors of the other arts and the sciences, biological 'sports'; they were variants on the norm; it would not be amiss, perhaps, to say that they were our first decadents. As in every evolutionary process, the sieve of selective survival chose from among them those whose inventions were acceptable to the majority: these became leaders and priests, their teachings or discoveries being incorporated in the main stream of man's social growth; while those others, whose contributions were less generally suitable, were forgotten. In this trial-and-error evolution of consciousness, a new word meant, to all intents, a new feeling; a new cluster of words meant a new complex of feelings; and in each item it could perhaps properly be said that this new perception or feeling represented a splitting and refinement of the coarser and simpler perceptions which had preceded it. Practically, in short, refinement and decadence are the same thing. Parts were substituted for wholes, shades and discriminations for the more vigorous but less exact holophrases which they replaced. The evolution of form proceeded from the large to the small, from the single and simple to the comprehensive and complex; and analogously from the energetic to the subtle.

And in this evolution of language, which is also the evolution of literature and consciousness, it must be borne in mind that the process has always been a strictly individualist and minority affair, a game of follow-my-leader. There has never been, so far as we know, a 'whole-society' art — the arrangement of society in the past has been just exactly as pyramidal, in its distribution of

consciousness, as it is today. The very conscious have always been the very few: the comparatively unconscious the comparative majority. In any evolutionary process this condition must be inevitable. The artists, the poets, the scientists, these are the advance guard who explore or invent new mental hinterlands, which the rest of mankind adopts and validates as it can and will.

Thus man gets his 'universal' in art, willy-nilly; but he gets it from the top, invariably, never from the bottom. And if we realize that this vital competitive hierarchy in levels of consciousness is indispensable to the continuation of a healthy and normal renewal and growth in man's awareness, then we can begin to see how mistaken was Tolstoy, for example, when he proposed to reduce all art to the level of understanding of the simplest peasant. At the drop of a hat, this would achieve that wholesale degradation of cultural energy (which Henry Adams foresaw) to a sterile uniformity. The creative principle of discrimination abandoned, all that marvelous process of exfoliation by which meaning has constantly given way to the more comprehensive on the one hand and the subtler on the other — the endless refinement of man's mind as externalized in his arts and sciences — all this would be at an end. For a faint notion of what it would lead to, one has only to consider the average total radio program of any given day. This is the field in which the Tolstoyan doctrine is most nearly applied.

And this, whether they know it or not, is exactly what the advocates of 'nationalism,' 'wholesomeness,' and 'the closed door' are up to. They want to turn back the clock; and clearly they mean to do it if they can. At the very moment when America has reached her cultural majority, and when she is able to give the world artists and writers of the first rank, these critics propose once more to close America in, to make her once again provincial; and they begin

with a threat of moral censorship on precisely those gifted writers who, in our time, have established themselves as 'world' citizens, and are of international importance. We must have no decadence, they say, whether domestic or imported — no escapists, no coteries. Yet it was Baudelaire, a decadent on their own admission, who did most in the last century to restore to French poetry its greatness, giving it a power, a richness, and a beauty, which it had never known before. And how few poets and artists in the history of mankind cannot be said to have been escapists, or members of a coterie! Is not art itself an escape, a sublimation — an escape *upward*?

Such mere name-calling will not stay the living forces of literature, nor reestablish outmoded customs barriers; nor can the complex, by a mere effort of the will, turn itself back into the simple, for those who fear it. At best, it will become the *faux bon*, the *faux naïf*; at worst, the sentimental. The process of refinement — of 'decadence' — has already gone too far. For every Henry James we get, every Proust or Eliot or Joyce (those dreadful fellows, who by some miracle of logic are 'empty formalists' on the one hand and purveyors of ugliness and the 'death-drive' on the other), the less likely are we ever again to have anything as genuinely naïve as *Snow-Bound* or *Little Women*; and certainly the less likely are we to mistake an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for a *Moby Dick*. Even in our much discussed 'regionalism,' what we are witnessing, one suspects, is the last stand of the naïf, the final rear guard action of a 'Little America' isolationism: for they too, the regional centres, are now fully and inescapably in the midstream of the one great human 'thing,' from which there is no longer any turning back.

It is no use fearing the complex or

chaotic merely because we see all values so visibly and violently in the melting-pot — surely that is no reason for squeamishness, or timidity, or for not facing even the most disagreeable facts in human nature. Man has built himself churches in the past, and of humbler materials; he can build them again, and build them better. No, we must be open to all influences, all knowledge, all speculation, all the winds of doctrine. The arts must be free. For better or worse, American literature is henceforth a part of world literature; and to aim now at a self-conscious and limited 'Americanism' would be nothing less than cowardice. The time for that sort of protective tariff, as for a limited-objective moral censorship, is past.

And we have a high responsibility. For if, at the moment, America is the arsenal of democracy, she is also the laboratory of the arts and sciences. Heir to all that is best in the history of mankind, let us hope that we can use our inheritance wisely, and that it can be said of us, as Sainte-Beuve said of Goethe, that he 'assimilated not merely tradition, but all traditions, and that without ceasing to be a modern of moderns; he keeps watch for every new sail on the horizon, but from the height of a Sunium. He would use the larger background and perspective to round out and support his individual insight, and so make of the present what it should be — not a servile imitation, nor yet a blank denial, of the past, but its creative continuation. "To the errors and aberrations of the hour" — he says — "we must oppose the masses of universal history."' And as a salutary reminder, let us add to this Tolstoy's footnote to patriotism: 'This disposition of preference for one nation over all others, like egoism, can in no wise be good.'

THE PRETENDER

BY WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK

I

JED SOUTHWICK stood on the uninhabited east shore of the Smoky Lake, before the high, bulbous castles of white tufa. It was after sunset and, in the purple haze across the lake, mountain wind was breaking into the solid heat of the day, twisting up slender whirlwinds of white dust from the shore. These columns traveled slowly northward, as if upon the face of the water. The clamor of innumerable water birds, which had amazed him in the boat at sunset, had given way to a silence so intense that his ears rang constantly. When he listened closely, the ringing deepened into a roar like that of a river in a cave. He knew this to be the roar of his own blood, an effect due to the altitude, yet was surprised at the clarity with which he heard through the roar the smallest exterior sound, like the fall of a pebble. Every sound was grossly magnified here, and seemed to be made by someone else, even when he dropped the pebble.

He was startled now by an unnatural clinking sound, and heaved himself up through the encompassing daydream state. Consciously refocusing his eyes from the deceptive distances of the lake, he saw his dog, a tall, thin, but big-chested pointer, tracing rapidly at the edge of the water, and then the Indian standing on the beach of black sand and tiny white shells. Southwick's supplies were neatly heaped upon the beach, and beside the boat the Indian was gently touching together two silver dollars

and watching Southwick, who again wondered impatiently why, when that flat Mongolian face really showed nothing, he must feel it, when turned upon him, to be humorously sardonic.

'Four dollars, Joe-Jack?' he asked.

The Indian smiled, showing his worn teeth. 'Four dollar,' he said. 'I come in the morning, four days.'

'In the morning, four days,' Southwick agreed.

While he could hear the motor, Southwick stood hypnotized, staring after the boat, and he could hear it for a long time. Long after it had ceased to echo on the rocks, after he could hear it constantly, freshets of wind brought back the faint put-put-put. Finally, however, there was only the wind in many tones among the rocks, and the slap of the rising water. Southwick woke then to the stimulus of his exceeding loneliness. The pointer also felt their situation, for he ceased casting about and sat near Southwick, quiet and alert.

Southwick, to relieve his own apprehension, spoke cheerfully to the dog, and began to carry his supplies up the beach and into a hollow behind one wing of the nearest castle, a place he had chosen in daylight.

When he had supper cooking, and could look about in the yellow light from the lantern, he experienced the exhilaration of something accomplished. He was almost glad that he had made the journey alone. There was a significance in even the least important experience

alone — like setting up camp or carrying the kegs and staring at the stars — that was lacking in company. Company diminished one's powers, both of attention and of retention.

Also, when he returned East, having made the trip alone, the only one of his group to have shot antelope or even seen them, he would have new confidence as a hunter. Seeing men like fat Jack Handley, or the immovable Peterson, or easy-going, confident Williams, around the fire in their Adirondack lodge made Southwick feel that he was a pretender. He usually got his buck with the others, nor did they ever openly ridicule him. Yet, remembering how he handled his rifle, how awkwardly he stalked, how at times his heart closed and his eyes danced when the buck posed in the thin, yellow woods and he could not raise his gun or feel the trigger with his finger, he always felt like a man sitting a little out of the circle. In the circle, in the light, the good hunters sat eating and drinking and talking with passive, humorous faces, and big hands that could not be unsteady. No, he had never been a hunter, but only a man tolerated by the hunters.

Down the sand, hard to tell how far off because of the echoes in the white castles, there was a loud report, and then a succession of many diminishing reports. Southwick held his breath and felt his heart pound abnormally, though outwardly he had scarcely stirred. Then, remembering the afternoon, he recognized the sound: a big bird, a pelican probably, taking off from the water. Incredibly big, these white pelicans, and looking somehow, in their wooden flight, prehistoric and reptilian. The clear reports of the take-off made him realize also that the wind had died and the water grown still.

A repetition of the sounds, accompanied by a similar but more distant outbreak just off beat, startled him less. Then he heard the jumping of a fish — a big one, by the splash of his fall. The

dog also listened intently to each new sound, and sometimes stood and growled a little, but sat down again at Southwick's command. As he began to recognize immediately the sounds coming to him, Southwick exulted again, as at his first recognition of accomplishment.

However, in spite of his new confidence, he made one concession to his old self. After extinguishing his lantern, and before crawling into his sleeping bag, he laid his rifle on the blanket within reach. Also, before he could fall asleep, he commanded the dog to lie between him and the wide opening from the rocks, which looked northward along the dark curve of the beach to two more great white rock fortifications like his own, and then, beyond, one by itself. The last things he was looking at before he fell asleep were these white citadels, gleaming monstrously in the starlight, one beyond another up the edge of the dark water against the dark hills.

II

Sometime in the night Southwick woke, not gradually, but at once, some definite impression demanding wakefulness having entered his mind. He had no recollection of the impression, not even, for a moment, any idea where he was. He lay staring at the stars and the towers of rock in bewilderment.

Then he heard the dog growl, a throaty growl, long, and reinforced at intervals, but always low, as if for his own encouragement and in the hope that nothing else would hear it. After a brief chill, which he could not explain or resist, Southwick raised himself on one elbow. At first he could not see the dog, which had been lying at the foot of the pallet. Then he discovered him, a few yards farther out, no longer lying, but standing rigidly and facing into the dark up the shore. Very quietly Southwick spoke to him.

'What is it, big boy?'

The dog relaxed and waved his tail a

few short strokes, but did not shift his attention.

Manfully Southwick said, 'Forget it, boy; it's nothing. Just a new place, that's all.'

The dog seemed about to return when he was again fixed by the sound which Southwick knew at once had awakened him. It was two short, high barks, followed immediately by a thin and rising howl, terminating in a series of the staccato barks so rapid as to sound like a falsetto chuckle.

The howl and chuckle were repeated from a slightly different point, and, sensing the rapid movement of its maker, Southwick in spite of himself shuddered, the chill only fading when it swept strongly over him again in reaction to a much closer series of yaps and a shorter howl, coming apparently from the foothills directly east. Instantly the northern voice responded, also with a shorter howl and greater number of yaps, now seeming to vary along a short scale. The nearer reply changed position also, and was entirely a high, rapid, barking one. The creatures were apparently converging; the affair in the dark was becoming purely conversational. The barking continued, with brief periods of silence and an occasional howl so short as to seem a rising inflection of somewhat hysterical laughter.

So constant was the change of position that Southwick realized, the chill renewed, that he was no longer sure of direction. The chills, which kept his body almost constantly covered with goose pimples, gave him a bodily sensation of danger which he was unable to combat as long as the shifting chuckling and howling continued to force his attention.

He was nearly certain again that the voices were converging, and that he knew where, though not how far away, when well to the south, from behind his own rock, rose another cry, more howl than chuckle. Then from the north, perhaps from beyond the farthest visible bulk of

foothill, came an extremely thin and prolonged howl, after which his ears, straining for the accustomed succession, could detect no yapping at all. Unable to think because of the complex attention demanded by the widely separated chorus, Southwick realized, and now with real panic, that he was losing track of numbers as well as direction. The chorus continuing, near, far, north, south, even at times, he believed, crossing, he was no longer able to tell whether there were two or three animals ranging aimlessly and with incredible speed, or a dozen moving slowly and with a group determination brought about by their ceaseless chatter. The mountains, and even the shore, became to him an intricate lacework of swiftly casting and purposeful voices.

The dog, also worried by this complexity, had withdrawn from his outpost, and stood near the pallet, growling.

Desiring not to make a sound, Southwick inched out of his blankets, knelt upon them, and took up his rifle, though without looking away from the opening and the starlit spaces beyond, in which he believed he could see small, dark forms running, or rather gliding, soundlessly back and forth, out of his range to the right and left, then back into it again. Now he understood that only the farther animals were talking, and that the darkness between him and them was filled with the movements of others, which were silent.

Foolishly there was filmed on his inner vision, clearly and in a moment of fixity, the bony, morose face of the trader at the Arahoe post, standing behind the counter with a crimson and gray Indian blanket on the wall at his back. The trader was saying, 'I wouldn't go over alone, if I were you.'

Then it came into his mind that these were coyotes, and probably harmless. But the recollection didn't decrease his tension, for too much of him continued to insist upon the need for defense and the difficulty of determining the num-

ber, location, and intention of the marauders. Also, never having seen a coyote, he found himself forming an image completely at odds with their reputation, and had several times to diminish the beasts of his brain, only to find them suddenly grown again and taking on improbable attributes of swiftness, savagery, and cunning.

The intervals when the coyotes were silent brought on, with a conviction of impending attack, an increase of tension and listening which made him stop breathing. When they sounded again, and still at a distance, he was greatly relieved, and drew his breath in a gasp, and then at once held it again, remembering that some of the beasts were closer, and silent. He now saw that their movements were being deliberately screened by the distant play of yapping and whining. He had lost all sense of time.

When, in one of the periods of silence, the dog suddenly barked, then growled in an unbroken crescendo and made a rush, disappearing around the right wing of the rock, Southwick jumped to his feet and ran crouching to the opposite wall. He was surprised to find himself standing there, his back to the rock and the rifle held at ready. He could not remember leaving his kneeling position.

In the outside dark he heard a flurry of barking and snapping, and then, as if in pursuit, but definitely moving away from him, the short, deeper, excited barks of the dog. He called, at first authoritatively, then frantically, but had to be quiet between calls to make sure of his own surroundings, and then heard the chase still receding. He could imagine the dog intent upon the wolf-like haunches shooting away before him, barking less often, but snarling with furious hopefulness when he touched, or seemed about to touch.

The dog did not return.

After waiting for perhaps an hour, Southwick slowly and cautiously sat down, propping his elbows on his knees

to hold the gun ready. Not certainly nearer or farther, the noisy play continued. With the dog gone, Southwick had to watch and listen more intently than ever. It went through his mind several times that he did not know whether an attacking coyote came silently, or with some warning, such as a fighting dog gives. It worried him that he could not conceive any intellectual method of discovering. You knew, or you didn't. The problem was insoluble, yet continued to recur until it even distracted his defensive attention.

Actually Southwick was getting tired, and could no longer maintain steadily the high pitch of caution induced by his dread. He had lapses beyond fear, and the fear returned each time with a quick impact which made him shake. The thoughts which drew him into the dangerous lapses were various and isolated. They seemed to have no regular order, or even to be related save by an emotional undercurrent of helplessness which in some cases did not pertain to the thought at all. Each thought came into his mind complete, as an image or even a printed statement, and left an indelible impression, so that at times he would see one or two or even three, or at least fragments of them, through the most recent one, much as in the movies, by superimposing, a man will be shown and behind him the scenes of which he is thinking. One was frequently repeated:—

The stage driver, a sandy man with a twisted mouth and a drawl, was driving the sand-colored touring car rapidly over the road between stone mountains and saying, but in Southwick's voice and in the manner of an encyclopædia, 'The coyote is fundamentally cowardly and will not attack a man unless the man is manifestly physically helpless. Almost the only exception to this is in the case of madness. The coyote is peculiarly susceptible to rabies, which often affects him even more violently than it does the dog.'

The words that recurred most frequently, always in a voice from outside, were, 'God, I wish Peterson was here; or Handley; or Williams. I wish Peterson and Handley and Williams were here.' And these were accompanied only by images of the men, arising and passing at the instant of thinking their names. Sometimes, after this thought, he would say to himself, though not aloud, 'My God, why did I ever come out here?'

In his wakeful and attentive moments he often believed that he heard the dog returning, and when this proved untrue was certain that the sound must have been made by a coyote which was very close. Also, because of his numbness of mind, he heard the coyotes' voices more as a unit and as more continuous than they actually were, and was now certain that they expressed the malice of intelligent beings.

Sometime before dawn the barking and thin howling finally ceased, as if the creatures had gradually lost body in the night. When he was finally aware of this, Southwick was so startled as to jerk completely awake again, but with a nerveless, dark-hour feeling that convinced him that any move he made would be ineffectual, though at the same time he understood that the coyotes had not withdrawn, but were about to act.

Peering closely, he saw two of them watching, one crouched directly before him, perhaps twenty feet away, the other to the left, sitting erect before a separate white boulder. He ceased breathing, and did not notice when the cold sweat broke out suddenly on his body. He was aware only, and almost with elation, that it was the moment of trial, and that never had he been more awake or clearheaded. In the crisis he had rallied.

He held his breath to watch accurately, but neither animal moved. In the instant he was forced to gulp air, the one before him lifted and crept

forward. Southwick sprang up, crying at it, 'Get out! Get out, damn you!' and gripping his rifle by the barrel to swing it as a club at the flying skull. The beast crouched again, and Southwick partially recovered, though, without knowing it, he was breathing rapidly and hoarsely, and sometimes whimpering. He only realized, with a new surge of fear, what he was doing with the rifle. As he turned it to fire, he obliquely saw the coyote before the boulder rise, though presenting the same silhouette as when sitting, and advance a step or two. Automatically the rifle went up and the trigger finger jerked. He heard the bullet ricochet with a high, thin scream from the rock. The animal remained standing, and the other took advantage of the shot to come forward again. Southwick swung the rifle and fired at it, but again must have missed, for the shadow remained attentive. He could not understand why he should shoot so poorly; not twenty feet, yet he had missed both.

He now shot with extreme care. Each report seemed to come from the rocks high above him, but he had no doubt he was shooting, and expected urgently to see first one and then the other of the shadows leap and drop with finality. Neither did. They simply abandoned their tactics of alternate approach and began to inch forward together. If he were to have any chance, he had to get one of them, so that his attention should not be divided. He told himself this, aloud, and, selecting the closer one, prepared to shoot as if at a target, releasing half his breath, counting three, and concentrating upon making his trigger finger squeeze and not jerk. When his patience was nearly exhausted, the trigger finally ceased to resist, and gave quickly. There was no report, but a click.

The click seemed louder than a report, because the creatures must understand what it meant. Momentarily Southwick's moral defenses caved. He screamed and, dropping the rifle, turned

and tried to scramble up the big rock. Not only was this impossible, but he fell in the attempt. Realizing his terrible vulnerability on his hands and knees, he whirled before rising, in order at least to face the rush. His knee struck against the rifle, which he had already forgotten. He struggled to his feet at once, prepared again to swing the gun. If he could catch the nearer one on the head he could kill it, at least stun it. Against one there would be a chance.

But, even as he prepared to charge, his eye was caught by another motion. It was immediately dissolved behind the wing of rock on the right, but a glance showed many there. Motion ceased the instant he looked, but it was evident that his plan to rush would be fatal. The two boldest were not stalking him alone, but serving as decoys to draw him for the pack. This realization might have unnerved him completely, but at the same time he perceived how much time had passed since the last shot, and knew that the coyotes had not understood what the click meant, and must also have been cowed by his bold threat. It was encouraging to know that they had their weakness also. He became quite cool again, and, as a ruse, advanced a step with the rifle held like a bat. The coyotes visibly shrank, not running, but sinking and withdrawing a little. This triumph almost made Southwick act rashly, but he checked himself and began a slow retreat towards his sleeping bag. In this retreat he remained upright, with the rifle threatening. When the coyotes once more inched in, he advanced a full step, boldly, and again they froze.

The success of his courage made Southwick exultant in spite of the gravity, perhaps finality, of his predicament. It was worth it, even death, to have proved himself. But he did not let exultation make him rash again. Continuing his guarded retreat until he was beside the storage cave, he there made one more threatening gesture, which

fixed the coyotes at the mouth of his shelter, then stooped swiftly, drew out a box of cartridges, and scuttled up among the boulders of the main formation. This climb was dangerous, for it exposed him to the pack behind the wing, and a rush from them might cut him off without a wall for his back. But in spite of this, and the fact that his legs several times failed him, he got to a shallow hollow in the upper wall. It was an excellent fort, for not only was it fifty feet above his camp, but the overhanging, broken dome made attack from above impossible; there was a sheer drop on the side towards the lake, and on the right an angle of the dome would force attackers into the same narrow boulder-filled route he had used.

With difficulty he reloaded his clip, inserted it, and threw the first cartridge into firing position. Only then did he feel more secure, and relax enough to realize that part of his clumsiness in loading had been due to the fact that he was whimpering almost constantly and breathing in great, tremulous sobs, though without tears. Thereafter he crouched in his fort, not as a superior being temporarily at bay, but as a mindless thing whose instinct demanded that it die squirming and gnawing.

III

The sun had been up more than two hours when Southwick, having carefully examined the sand and rocks below, ventured out of his hollow.

In camp he was cautious, eating and drinking with his back to the rock and the rifle beside him, and only after forcing himself to walk over the whole area in which his assailants had appeared. But water, food, and the peaceful clarity of every detail in the sunlight partially restored his sense of security. He compelled himself to sit still while he smoked an entire cigarette, and this normal behavior led him to wonder how great a part imagination had played in the experience of the night. When he had

finished the cigarette he went to the spot where he had stood to fire at the two decoy coyotes. The sand there was covered with doglike tracks, but this told him nothing certain. His dog had moved about there a great deal. In what he believed to have been the approximate positions of the two animals when he last fired, there was a sage bush and a small white rock with an indented side towards him. And there was scattered brush where he believed he had seen the pack hovering. But the certainty that there had been motion in the night remained, and he could not be sure. Also, he could not doubt that the laughter and howling had been real.

He returned to his sleeping bag, moved it into the shade of the wing, and sat down on it. He sat for a long time, scarcely thinking or feeling anything but the increasing heat. He wanted very much to sleep. His eyes felt heavy, scorched and enlarged, and caused pain and dizziness when he looked at sunlight on the white sand and rock. But, though he nearly fell asleep several times, he put off complete surrender. Finally he decided at least to rest, and, drawing his sleeping bag to a position in which his head and shoulders would be raised, he lay down. Shortly, in this position, he did sleep.

He was awakened at noon by the sun on his face. He had two sensations at the moment of waking, horror at his carelessness and certainty that his dog was near. He sat up quickly and looked about, but, seeing that he was still alone, realized that actually he had felt that the dog had never been absent. He made a brief reconnaissance, and, finding all secure, ate again and drank a great deal of water. But his anxiety about the dog was not fixed. He not only felt its absence more sharply, being partially refreshed, but realized that the dog was a test of the reality of the night before. If the dog was all right, everything was all right. He had to be sure about the dog.

Still he wouldn't call for it. It was unthinkable that he should shatter that protective silence. He preferred to take his rifle and go and look for the dog, within a reasonable radius. He understood that the elevated hollow in the tufa formation had become a centre of his activity with which he must maintain spiritual contact. Beyond the point at which this contact became tenuous, he must not proceed.

But as he walked he began gradually to move with more freedom, which restored a fallacious sense of power. His first starts at the skitterings of lizards wore down to a tolerant expectation. He began to see the lizards before they stirred, and, since there was nothing else to startle him, his confidence increased.

When he actually found the dog, then, he was shocked, and at the same moment saw that it was late in the afternoon and felt forcibly that he had lost contact with his fort. The dog was lying on its side in a small dry gully, with its head back as if baying, and there were already a large number of flies working, not only on its eyes, but on its belly and extended throat, which were elaborately ripped. There was also a stream of small red ants entering the belly, and one leaving.

His return to the rock castle was nearly a flight.

He arrived at the rocks sweating heavily, but at once set to work hauling his sleeping bag, and then his stove, water kegs, canned goods, and ammunition up over the rocks and into his elevated hollow. It troubled him all during the time he worked that he must leave his rifle at one end or the other of the route, and, having elected to leave it at the base, he was sure each time he began to climb that he should have carried it up first and left it above, where he would finally need it.

At last, however, and while there was still a little daylight, he was secured in his fort. He was encouraged, and made coffee and cooked stew. These, and a

glass of whiskey taken slowly in the position of a sitting Buddha, with the rifle across his lap, somewhat steadied him, in spite of thoughts brought back by the increasing darkness, in which, slowly, isolated rocks and bushes below him grew and the mountains became steadily nearer and higher.

Indeed, sitting thus on the soft pallet, his back supported by the cliff, he nearly dozed. But some indefinable time later, of the passage of which he was certain only because the stars had suddenly occupied the world again, any further lack of caution became impossible. A sensation of rising hair on his spine recurred in Southwick, and he drew his breath in a great, trembling sigh when he realized, because it was repeated, what had wakened him. From somewhere in the distance under the mountains, but he knew that he was not at all sure where, came faintly two short, high barks, followed immediately by a thin and rising howl terminating in a series of the staccato barks so rapid as to sound like a falsetto chuckle.

IV

Before daylight on the fourth morning, in the boat approaching the eastern shore, the morose agent was yelling at Joe-Jack above the chatter of the outboard motor, 'You're crazy. I'd have heard it, wouldn't I? Over the water you could hear a rock bounce, let alone a rifle.'

The Indian in the prow did not look back, but the trader could hear him by turning his head.

'I heard 'em. Yesterday night, too.'

The trader was contemptuous. 'Last night, too, eh?'

'The other nights, too.'

'You tellin' me you heard shootin' every night?' the trader yelled.

He could see the Indian's head jerk once in assent.

'Maybe he was shootin' at coyotes,' the agent said. 'They're enough to drive a man crazy at night, sometimes.'

The Indian shook his head.

'Ghosts, I suppose,' said the agent. 'Spooks of your blanket forefathers.'

The Indian shrugged his shoulders.

'All night, this night, he shoot,' he said after a moment.

'I didn't hear anything,' said the agent.

'All night,' Joe-Jack said. Then he said, 'No coyotes all night.'

The agent shook his head as if troubled by a persistent though light worry. He switched sideways to anchor the tiller with a knee while he lit a cigarette. The flare showed his face as surly and indifferent as ever.

The white shore had appeared, a faint long line before them. The trader peered intently, swung the boat a little to the north, and stepped the motor down. The Indian was also peering from his place in the prow. The report of a rifle and the whining ricochet, both sounding very close, surprised them. They got out onto the sand.

'What in hell's he shootin' at in this light?' the agent said. 'The guy's cracked.'

Once more they heard the rifle.

'On the north side,' the trader said, and they moved up more rapidly. Before passing beyond the last bulge onto the north side, however, the trader stopped and shouted, 'Hey!'

His voice echoed briefly, but there was silence after it.

The trader dropped his cigarette into the sand, ground it in with his heel, and stared at the indentation for a moment. Then he appeared to have come to a decision. He pointed to a piece of sagebrush, recently uprooted, lying between the rocks.

'Gimme that,' he said.

Joe-Jack gave it to him. Removing his reefer, which was a heavy one of red plaid, he put it over the bush and pushed it slowly from behind the rock. The report and fountain of sand came at once. When he withdrew the coat, there was a clean hole in it, through the centre of

the back. He thrust the sagebrush out by itself. The bullet snipped a central twig from it and screamed off the face of a small rock beyond.

'God,' the trader said, 'he'll shoot at anything.'

The Indian pointed at the rock from which the last bullet had ricocheted and shook his head.

'Don't worry,' the trader said. 'I won't try it again.'

He put his coat on, after fingering the hole, squatted under the shelter of the rock, and for a time pulled his lip and stared at nothing.

'Well,' he said finally, 'we gotta try. One more like that, though, and he can stay here till doomsday, for all of me. What the devil was his name?' he said, with sudden irritation. 'If I could remember his name —'

'Sudwig,' Joe-Jack said.

'That's it. Southwick — Jed Southwick. Hey!' he called.

There was only the echo again.

'Hey, Southwick!' he called.

He believed that again there would be only silence, but from above them a hoarse voice called with great urgency, 'Peterson, is that you? Is that you, Pete?' and, when the agent was unable to conceive an immediate reply, cried even more urgently, 'Handley? Peterson? Williams? Is that you?'

The trader looked at the Indian and shook his head once, with great finality, and then shrugged his shoulders.

'Petel!' cried the voice above. It was terrified by the silence. 'Is that you, Pete?'

'Yeah,' the trader called heartily. 'It's me, all right. Come on down.'

'Oh, God,' cried the voice above. 'Oh, thank God.' They could hear Southwick scrambling on the rocks, and the rifle striking against them. They could hear him also continually talking as he came down, a running, feverish, relieved chatter.

The trader's face suddenly became very nervous and determined. 'Look,'

he said quickly to the Indian, 'I don't know what Peterson looks like, but not like you, that's a cinch. Get back under,' he instructed, pushing the Indian against the rock. 'And you get that gun,' he said nervously.

He listened. The scrambling above had stopped. After a moment the voice called again, 'Petel! Where are you, Pete?' The man was dreadfully afraid again, and the voice was choked, as with the beginning of weeping.

The agent took a deep breath, as if about to plunge into cold water.

'Here!' he called. 'Right here, Jed.'

Again the boots came slipping and sliding above. Twice the man must have fallen, for the rattling stopped, and the second time there was a moan.

'Coming, Jed?' the agent called.

He was coming. The babbling had begun again also, and now the agent could make out part of it. 'I heard you the first time, Pete,' Southwick was weeping joyfully. 'But I wasn't sure. I've been hearing you all night. All night I'd think I heard you, and I'd listen, but you weren't there. I kept thinking I heard you, but there wasn't anything. I was hearing all sorts of things, I guess.'

Southwick appeared. His face, under the dirt, was blistered until the eyes were almost closed, and the lips were swollen and black. Through the scorched skin stood a heavy stubble of beard. Even his hands, one of them holding the rifle, were red and sore-looking. There were tears running in the dirt and blisters of his face.

He did not hesitate upon seeing the agent. He kept running forward, grinning through his tears. In fact he was weak with joy and relief, nearly laughing. He dropped the rifle and took the agent's extended hand in both his, pumping it up and down. The eyes staring up into the agent's were sunken, so that they appeared black above. The lids were scorched and thick, but still between them could be seen the brimming blue eyes, the great relief and joy in them.

'God, I'm glad you got here, Pete,' he cried. 'You have no idea how glad I am you got here.'

He laughed, a little hysterically, because, naturally, he was tired. 'I don't know,' he laughed, 'if I could have stuck it if you hadn't got here now. All night, this time.'

The Indian picked up the rifle, and turned towards the rocks from which Southwick had just descended.

'Never mind, Joe,' the trader said. 'Another time. Nobody'll get them here.'

Southwick's face clouded. 'Joe?' he asked.

'You remember,' the trader risked. 'The Indian that brought us over.'

'Oh, yes, yes, of course,' Southwick said cheerfully, and looked at Joe for a long time, smiling constantly, but obviously without recognition.

'Come on,' the agent said. 'We'll talk on the way over.' He took Southwick's arm.

The Indian followed them with the rifle. Two or three times he looked up at the rocks, where the rest of Southwick's things were visible.

'You must have scared them off when you came up,' Southwick said, laughing.

'Guess we did,' the agent agreed. 'Must have. We didn't even see them.' He had to support Southwick somewhat, with his arm.

'Where's Handley?' Southwick asked. 'And Williams?'

'They didn't come over,' the agent said. He was finding the talk difficult. 'I came over alone, with Joe.'

They worked down towards the beach in silence for a moment.

'I lost the dog, though,' Southwick said sadly. 'But you know, Pete,' he went on joyously, and gripped the agent's arm. He hesitated, and when he spoke again it was with more restraint. 'You know, Pete, I used to be scared

sometimes. I never said anything, of course, but I was. I was always pretending. You knew it, didn't you, Pete?' he asked.

'I guess so,' said the agent. 'Yes, I knew it.'

'They all knew it, didn't they, Pete?'

'Yeah, I guess they all knew it.'

'Well, you know, Pete,' Southwick said joyfully again, 'I'm not any more. I got over it, Pete. It's licked. All last night, Pete, and scarcely enough light to see them by, I sat up there and kept those ugly devils off. All night, Pete, and by myself. And I wasn't scared.'

'That's good,' the trader said. 'That's good.'

He helped Southwick into the boat while the Indian held it up against the beach. When the agent was seated at the tiller again, Joe-Jack pushed off, getting wet to his ankles before he pulled up onto the prow and crawled in. He kept tight hold on the gun, though.

The agent finally got the motor started. When he had the boat turned and headed for the far side, he took cigarettes from his shirt pocket.

'Have one?' he asked Southwick.

'Thanks.'

When they had smoked a moment, and as the boat settled into its regular chatter, Southwick said, 'You have no idea what it's like, Pete.'

'What what's like?' the agent asked.

'Not to be afraid any more,' Southwick said. In spite of the blisters and dirt, it could be seen that his expression was beatific.

'Yeh,' said the agent.

'Especially when you've been afraid as long as I have,' Southwick said.

The agent didn't say anything. He smoked and gave his attention to the motor, which was not running altogether smoothly.

The Indian, however, continued to watch Southwick's back attentively.

SPRING COMES TO EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

BY MARION EDITH SMITH

MURKY
and turbulent
now the Ohio
sucks at the mudbanks
muffles a roar
rolling redundantly
down through the flatlands
heavy with water-weight
pounding the levee
curving where Evansville
braces the shore.

*Spring came in on the river's crest
when the last cold wind was fading;
Spring came in on a cargo barge
with the captain's bill of lading.*

On Seventh
and Sycamore
in the street by the brewery
the wild nutty fragrance
of malt fermenting
comes out to the passer-by
and lingers
and spices the morning air
where the freight cars clank
and squeal and the railroad tracks
stretch away and back forever.

*Spring came in on a boxcar train
from a thousand miles away;
Spring came in on the L. and N.
in a mild blue-vaulted day.*

White dogwood blooms
on the trim new lawns
and the redbud screens
the graveyard wall;
the jonquils blaze in the Pigeon Creek mire.

Take a highway out of town
take a road
between the spring-ploughed fields
and the acres ribbed with wheat
where the corrugated green
spreads out to the rim of the sky.

*Spring came in on a ten-ton truck
of Dixie fruit and grain;
Spring came in on a moving van
in a windless night of rain.*

THE LOST LOVE

BY RANDALL JARRELL

WHEN I woke up this morning
I found I had dreamed of you;
You looked at me just as you used to
(Just as you always do

In these dreams I need so often)
And you said to me dryly, 'Your face
Is older than when I knew you.'
I tried and could not say, 'Yes.'

'Your eyes are red with weeping,'
You murmured tranquilly.
But when I could still say nothing
You stretched your hand trembling to me

And whispered, 'O my poor love —'
And I felt a pang of such joy
Or pain that I cried, 'I am dreaming.'
I awoke and it was day.

In my dream last night, I remember,
Your face was sick and old;
Your voice shook; when I touched you
My hand was cold.

CANADA AND OURSELVES

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

I

CANADA, our friendly neighbor, is also our most active and best equipped war ally on this continent. The ever-increasing measure of informal coöperation that had been going on with Canada before the United States became a formal belligerent is being and will be vastly expanded. Japanese threats in the Pacific affect equally Vancouver and San Francisco and lend a new urgency to the pigeonholed scheme for a highway across Canadian territory to Alaska, our isolated Arctic outpost. German submarines have been carrying out their depredations off the eastern coast of Canada, as well as off our own eastern shores. Obviously the closest kind of coöperation between our own naval and air forces and Canada's greatly enlarged navy and already powerful air squadrons is in order.

Canada is emphatically the kind of country that one welcomes as comrade in the same trench. Canadians established a magnificent fighting record in France in the last world conflict; Canada lost more lives in that struggle than the United States, despite the disparity in population. And Canada's showing in the present war, apart from the fumbings and hitches that are almost inevitable when a peace-loving democratic country is getting up war steam, has been excellent. It was my impression, after spending several months in Canada last summer and autumn, that Canada had done and was doing more than some Canadians were willing to recognize.

Some of the deprecation of Canada's war effort that one finds in Ottawa and Toronto is attributable to the thoroughly sound instinct that there is no such word as 'enough' in total war. Some of it, one suspects, has less worthy origins in personal dislike of Premier Mackenzie King and in jockeying for party political advantage.

The number of Canadians who have volunteered for service anywhere in the world, according to the latest figures, is 422,000 — about 275,000 in the Army, 110,000 in the Air Force, and 30,000 in the Navy. Translated into United States terms, with allowance for the difference in population, this works out at almost five million volunteers.

The Commonwealth Air Training Scheme, which has covered Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific with a network of air training stations, is probably Canada's greatest individual contribution to the war. There are more than a hundred thousand men in this service and there are enough foreigners to give some of the training stations a very international character. Approximately 80 per cent of the flyers and ground crews are Canadians; some 10 per cent are from the United States; and one finds contingents of aviation cadets from Australia and New Zealand in these Canadian camps. There are also schools for training RAF pilots. What has been a trickle of Canadian aviators to England has become a stream.

There are between 100,000 and 150,000

Canadian troops, including one complete armored division, in England, a little nervy and on edge because of the fighting that has not come their way. These Canadian troops have been given a place of honor in the British home defense line, in some of the southeastern and southern counties where the full shock of the German invasion, if it ever comes, is likely to be felt. Two thousand Canadians fought and fell with Hong Kong, both the commanding officer and his chief of staff being killed in this last-ditch action.

Canada is making a vastly greater industrial war effort than was the case in the last war. A plant in Toronto is turning out the very effective Bren machine guns in large quantities, and the Canadian branches of Ford and General Motors are producing large numbers of military vehicles. Tanks and airplanes were slower in getting under way. But the Minister of Munitions, Mr. C. D. Howe, recently announced that the rate of aircraft production was 300 per month, while light tanks were being sent to Russia at the rate of three daily. Canadian shipyards are working at maximum capacity in an effort to overcome U-boat sinkings, and it is expected that Canada will turn out as much merchant shipping as Great Britain in 1942.

Such facts should be borne in mind in weighing the background and significance of the plebiscite on the issue of leaving the Government free to introduce overseas conscription that seems likely to focus international attention on Canada. At first sight it may seem difficult to understand why such a plebiscite should be held at a time when Canada is inextricably involved in a global war that will certainly require extensive pooling of man power and resources of all the combatants if it is to be fought effectively.

The explanation of the plebiscite is to be found, first, in the special psychology of Quebec Province; second, in the personality of Premier Mackenzie King.

Canada, it should always be remembered, is not a melting-pot nation like the United States, at least not so far as the descendants of its original French settlers are concerned.

'In this land of Quebec nothing has changed.'

This is the *leitmotiv* of a glowing passage in the epic novel of French Canada, Louis Hémon's *Maria Chapdelaine*. It is certainly true as regards the general French-Canadian reaction to participation in overseas war. Canadians of French descent are separated from their English-speaking compatriots by a triple barrier of race, religion, and language. They have no sentimental ties with England, few with France itself. With a tradition of generations of protective struggle for the maintenance of their cultural identity they have developed a psychology in relation to Europe similar to that of the most extreme American isolationists. And Pearl Harbor stirred no responsive chords in the French Canadians.

Just when isolationist slogans have been silenced in the United States they have been revived and intensified in French Canada. As I write I have before me a manifesto of the League for the Defense of Canada, an organization which most English Canadians would regard as unsuitably named, since its objective is to fight conscription for overseas service. '*Canada d'abord*,' or '*Canada First*,' is its slogan, and it urges all its sympathizers to vote no on the plebiscite that is to be held on the question of releasing the Government from its pledges not to enforce conscription for service outside of Canada. (Conscription for military service inside Canada and for the duration of the war has been in operation for some time.) The anti-conscription arguments of the newly formed League are that Canada must keep its forces for its own defense, that the voluntary system has worked satisfactorily, and that Canada, with a population of a little over eleven mil-

lions, does not possess unlimited manpower.

One of the leading figures in the League is the Deputy Maxime Raymond, with whom I spent several hours of interesting conversation last summer. M. Raymond was one of the few deputies who voted against Canada's declaration of war, and he made no pretense of having changed his views. A cultivated, urbane lawyer, he developed much the same arguments against Canadian involvement in overseas wars that one would have expected to hear at that time from Colonel Lindbergh or Senator Wheeler.

It would, of course, be an exaggeration to say that all French Canadians are opposed to the war. Some descendants of old French military families follow a family tradition when they take officers' commissions. There was a French contingent in the first Canadian expeditionary force that landed in the British Isles. But any objective observer of French-Canadian opinion would report, I think, that the balance of opinion is strongly against conscription for overseas service. The Government has not published figures on this delicate question; but private inquiry convinces me that the percentage of volunteers is much higher among English than among French Canadians. It is also definitely higher among British-born than among Canadian-born.

Some of the 1917 bitterness is beginning to reappear on the plebiscite and conscription issues. An extremist Canadian speaker says that 'over there they don't fight. They let the Hindu, the African, the Australian fight.' Whereupon an irate British Canadian suggests that the speaker forgets 'on which side of the Channel the people live who quit.'

There will be more hard words and perhaps blows before the issue is settled. The plebiscite has its unfortunate aspects; but to Mr. King it apparently represents the only course which he re-

gards as honorable, in view of the fact that he has repeatedly pledged himself against conscription for overseas service. Americans should remember that December 7 did not have the same significance for Canada as for the United States. The plebiscite is to be taken not on the direct issue of conscription for foreign service (on this point a popular vote might be uncomfortably close, since the French alone are almost 30 per cent of the population), but on the issue of giving the Government a free hand and releasing Mr. King from his anti-conscription promises. By posing the question in this way the Premier hopes to break the solid French front by introducing the element of personal confidence in himself. In the event of an affirmative majority he will presumably attempt to introduce the change, if he regards it as necessary. The plebiscite may be significant in history as one of the last of a series of steps designed to bring Canada into total war. That such a zigzag course was necessary is a consequence of the 'entente without cordiality' which, in André Siegfried's happy phrase, has characterized the relations between French and British Canadians.

II

Canada has always been a bridge state between North America and Europe. It is the only important and independent country in this hemisphere with political ties that make participation in any large war involving the British Empire almost inevitable. But physically and in many ways psychologically it clearly belongs to North America. By a curious paradox of politics one of the most striking consequences of the present war, in which Canada has given a second demonstration of loyalty to what many Canadians regard as the mother country, is to draw Canada economically farther away from Europe, to integrate its life more closely with that of the United States.

In outward appearance Canada is very definitely a North American, not a European, land. It possesses the vast spaces and distances that are likely to be one of the strongest impressions of the European who visits the United States. And many regions of Canada suggest northward extensions of the United States. We have, to be sure, no equivalent for the distinctive French community, closely knit by bonds of race and religion, that one finds in the Province of Quebec. But the tranquil prosperous farming country of the Upper St. Lawrence is not very different from neighboring districts of New England and New York. And Canada's prairie provinces — Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta — have much in common with Kansas and Iowa and the Dakotas.

It is the English refugee, not the United States tourist, who is the stranger in Canada, who must make the greater number of adaptations to living habits that seem unfamiliar. The pattern of Canadian social life (the French minority always excepted) is closely akin to our own. Your English-speaking Canadian instinctively rotates with the Rotarians and roars with the Lions. He feels at home in the garb of the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

London, Ontario, is located in Middlesex County on the Thames River. The names of some of the best-known streets of the British capital are proudly imitated in the Canadian town. But the streets and shops of this New World London suggest Des Moines or Omaha more than those of a British community of similar size. And the man from London, Ontario, who has traveled abroad is just as amused, surprised, and mildly irritated by the things that are 'different' in England as if he were a tourist from Iowa or Nebraska.

Listen to a lecture on Canadian farm problems and you can easily imagine yourself south of the border. There are the same familiar elements: too much

submarginal land brought under cultivation during the last war; too much speculation in land; too many closed foreign markets; and finally, more or less successful governmental efforts to bail the farmers out and to avert the worst consequences of a prolonged slump in agricultural prices.

There are variations in detail, of course. The Canadian wheat problem is more acute than ours, because Canada can consume so much less of its output. But basically Canada's economic destiny is inseparably and very closely linked with our own. Few Canadians pay any attention to the quotations on the British security markets. But a flutter on Wall Street excites immediate repercussions in Montreal and Toronto.

Business and labor in the two countries are closely associated. United States technical and advertising methods have crossed the border along with the four billion dollars of American capital that are invested in Canada. The A. F. of L. and the CIO have their affiliated Canadian unions.

Canadians read United States newspapers and magazines, see Hollywood films, listen to the programs of United States broadcasting stations. Canada's population is both too sparse and too diffused to maintain a vigorous independent national culture.

Canada now has about twelve million inhabitants. They are spread out in a long narrow ribbon formation from Cape Breton at the eastern end of Nova Scotia to Vancouver in the West. Fifty per cent of the Canadians live within a hundred miles, and 90 per cent within two hundred miles, of the American border. When one subtracts the three and a half million French Canadians it is evident that the English-speaking community is too small to resist a considerable measure of cultural assimilation from the nation of one hundred and thirty millions south of the border.

At the same time, old loyalties are tenacious and old memories are long.

Many people in Canada think and speak of England as 'the old country.' The proportion of Canadians who were born in the British Isles or who have relatives there is quite high.

To many Canadians the moral obligation to fight in England's wars is simple, clear, unescapable, as it would not be to an American. The daughter of the hostess at a lodge in the Canadian Rockies where I was staying was expecting a child. Her husband was in the armored division at Camp Borden, which is supposed to go overseas before the end of the year. The mother remarked that the girl had been born under the same circumstances, with her father fighting overseas. There was no suggestion of complaint, no sense of exceptional devotion; just a plain statement of fact.

While the English-speaking Canadian has his misunderstandings with the individual Englishman, he is fiercely loyal to England as an entity. This impression was confirmed by an Englishman, a retired army officer, now in business in Canada, who was in the mood of national self-criticism in which Englishmen sometimes indulge. He spoke scathingly of the old school tie. He criticized the British educational system as providing too small a class of men trained for leadership and initiative. He recalled instances of snobbishness in the cavalry regiment where he served in India. He referred without admiration to a business executive in England who had expressed a preference for a stupid lad from Eton over a bright boy from a more plebeian school. Then he paused in his recital of national shortcomings and said:—

'It's a relief to get these things off my mind. I couldn't say them to a Canadian, you know. If I said anything critical about England publicly in this country I'd probably be lynched.'

So there are strong sentimental factors that have kept Canada a separate although friendly neighbor to the United

States. It was these sentimental factors, together with certain industrial and financial vested interests, that caused the Canadian electorate on two occasions, in 1891 and in 1911, to reject the policy of closer economic association with the United States that might have been an opening wedge for political union.

III

But a conspicuous effect of the present war has been to increase Canada's economic dependence on the United States. The final consequence for Canada of what most English-speaking Canadians regarded as a natural gesture of loyalty to 'the old country' may be a much closer association with the United States than either country would have regarded as possible before the beginning of the conflict.

The fall of France aroused both Canada and ourselves to the consciousness that a common destiny on this continent involved common responsibilities to meet common dangers. The conference at Ogdensburg between President Roosevelt and Premier Mackenzie King, in August 1940, led to a new departure in United States-Canadian relations through the creation of a Joint Defense Board, which meets periodically. The decisions of this board have naturally been kept secret.

It is known, however, that there has been far-reaching agreement as to coastal defense, both in the Atlantic and in the Pacific. Nova Scotia is a long eastward projection into the Atlantic. New forts, equipped with long-range guns, in the neighborhood of Sydney and Halifax and Shelburne along the coast of Nova Scotia, can reasonably be considered outposts for the defense of Boston and New York. The commission has given careful consideration to the manning and equipment of these forts and of the corresponding coast defenses on the New England shores of the United States.

Barren, poverty-stricken Newfound-

land has become a lively scene of United States-British-Canadian military coöperation. Besides acquiring a naval base there in the destroyer deal of September 1940, the United States is sharing the use of the huge Gander Lake airport, the largest in the world and the take-off point for the Atlantic Ferry.

Big Catalina flying boats patrol the waters around Newfoundland and Labrador, and a new phase in Canadian-American-British naval coöperation has been instituted by President Roosevelt's 'shoot at sight' orders and assumption of convoying functions for the American Navy as far as Iceland. While I was in Halifax last September the British Admiral Bonham-Carter, who had hitherto been in charge of convoy operations between Canada and the United States, was preparing to depart. The American Navy had relieved the British of one of its most pressing pre-occupations.

How far the old Canadian suspicion of possible United States annexationist designs has disappeared in the light of today's dangers is evident from the fact that the United States movement into Newfoundland, the key to Canada's eastern sea approaches, was cordially welcomed. Nor has there been any opposition in Canada to the idea of an 'American corridor' in the shape of a proposed military road across Western Canada, connecting the United States with Alaska.

At the present time the route to be followed by this road has not been determined and there is some question as to its desirability. It may be that a development of existing air bases in Northwestern Canada would take care of the possible need for swift communication with Alaska more surely than a road which, if built through the mountains of Northern British Columbia, would be hard to keep open during the season of heavy snowfall. But this is a matter for the United States to decide. Canada is willing to grant the use of its territory

for a road that would mainly be designed for the passage of United States troops and supplies.

So far United States-Canadian military coöperation is in the embryonic stage. Plans of coast defense would, of course, only come into practical operation if the war should take an unexpectedly disastrous turn either in the Atlantic or in the Pacific.

But economically the war has brought about very significant changes that are calculated to bring Canada much more closely into the United States orbit. And some of these changes show signs of becoming permanent, or at least of outlasting the war by some years.

In normal times Canada balances its international accounts by a triangular process. It builds up with Great Britain a surplus of exports over imports that offsets its unfavorable balance of trade with the United States. The war has completely upset this arrangement because the pound sterling has ceased to be a freely convertible currency. Great Britain is no longer a profitable market, but a front line of defense, to be supplied at any cost.

Contrary to some misleading statements that have been circulated in this country, Canada is doing just what the United States is doing — subsidizing the British war effort by pouring munitions, foodstuffs, and other supplies into the British Isles with no thought of present compensation and only the faintest prospect of future repayment.

Canadian financial authorities told me that, apart from Canada's own war expenditures of about \$1,450,000,000, a sum of at least \$900,000,000 is being advanced to Great Britain in the form of munitions and supplies during the current fiscal year. This would be the equivalent of an advance of thirteen or fourteen billion dollars from the United States, given the difference in national incomes.

With Great Britain, under present circumstances, representing an economic

drain, not a source of surplus credits for the settlement of other international accounts, there is a new stringency in the financial relations between the United States and Canada. Canadian imports from the United States have greatly increased because of war needs and will probably amount to about \$850,000,000 in the present year. Exports, including gold, are estimated at from \$600,000,000 to \$650,000,000.

The Canadian Government has taken a number of measures to relieve the strain on its financial equilibrium that a permanently lopsided balance of payments with the United States represents at a time when the normal export surplus with Great Britain has disappeared because of war conditions. Canadians are not permitted to travel in the United States except for urgent reasons of health or business. This saves precious United States dollars for the Canadian Treasury. There is a system of excise taxes, designed to discourage the importation of dispensable commodities from the United States. If one receives a book from the United States, even if it is not designed for resale, three separate taxes, adding up to 28 per cent of the value of the book, are levied. Canada's varied tourist attractions, from the splendid mountains of the West to the old-fashioned villages of the Gaspé, are exploited and promoted for the purpose of bringing American dollars into the country.

All these measures, however, were not enough, and serious difficulties in the maintenance of the present stable rate of the Canadian dollar (which is at about a 10 per cent discount in relation to the American dollar) were staved off by the so-called Hyde Park Agreement of last March. This provided that the United States should make a special effort to buy war materials, such as aluminum and base metals, from Canada, and that Canada should receive lease-lend credit for airplane engines and other American-made component parts of munitions for Great Britain.

So, although Canada is not yet receiving lease-lend funds for its own benefit, it is being carried financially to some extent on the expansive wave of American war spending. Some day this wave will subside, and then the problem of money transfer, one of the main devils of the European economic anarchy that preceded the present war, may well become acute for Canada. Besides having a normally unfavorable trade balance with the United States, Canada must find over 200,000,000 United States dollars every year to meet interest and dividends on the \$4,000,000,000 of United States invested capital in the Dominion.

This \$4,000,000,000 is now in a partially frozen status. The American investor cannot withdraw his money and turn it into his own currency. But Canada is more liberal than most states which apply the 'freezing' process in finance. It permits the United States investor to receive his interest and dividends in his own money, minus a 15 per cent tax and the 10 per cent discount for the lower value of the Canadian dollar.

One means of observing Canada's increasing economic dependence on the United States is to go into a factory that was formerly equipped from Coventry or Birmingham and see the rows of new drills and presses and other machines with some such United States label as Cincinnati, Fort Wayne, or Cleveland. The British factories, if they have escaped the blitz, are too busily employed turning out munitions to supply equipment for Canada on the former scale.

IV

The growing isolation from foreign markets that is an inevitable accompaniment of the war in its present stage is throwing Canada and the United States more and more on each other's resources. Few people perhaps realize that an isolated hemisphere economy, whether we like it or not, is advancing from the

stage of theory to fact. Like the United States, Canada has virtually no trade with continental Europe or with Japan. Russia and China must also be largely written off, and Great Britain is mainly an absorber of war supplies.

Canadian reliance on the United States is greatly accentuated by the disappearance of so many alternative markets and sources of supply. A steel shortage with us means a dislocation of a Canadian shipbuilding program. An oil deficiency in the United States means immediate gasoline curtailment measures in the Dominion.

So there has been a burgeoning of organizations designed to ease points of economic friction and to promote the most effective joint use of Canadian and United States resources. Of these the two most important are the Materials Coördination Committee and the Joint Economic Committee. The first includes two members of the former OPM — Mr. Stettinius and Mr. Babb — and the Canadian controllers for metals and power. Its purpose is to collect and exchange raw materials, for one country may have a surplus of one and a deficit of another, while a reverse situation may prevail across the border. It also aims to eliminate competition in the buying of raw materials.

Typical agenda for a meeting of the Joint Economic Committee included the following subjects: provision of food for Great Britain from the combined agricultural resources of the two countries; tariff obstacles to the movement of defense supplies; the most efficient use of Great Lakes shipping in the movement of wheat to England and of iron ore to the steel centres of Canada and of the United States; plans for pooling the materials and manufactures of Canada and the United States in meeting Latin-American requirements.

One can recognize from this list of subjects how the war is breaking down old lines of economic division and fusing Canada with the United States, to a

considerable extent, in a single coördinated North American economy. Even more significant than the formal organizations that have been created is the newly formed habit of regular personal contact between Canadian and United States government officials and business men. The manager of a big Canadian munitions plant is likely to be in long-distance communication with Washington almost as often as with Ottawa. Canada has a most vital concern with nearly every new United States decision as to priorities.

Coal, oil, iron, steel, cotton, machine tools — these are only a few of the things for which Canada relies on the United States for at least part of its supply. Engines for Canadian airplanes and tanks are fabricated south of the border.

In return Canada has a good deal to give. It has built up an aluminum industry far in excess of its own needs, on a basis of cheap and abundant power. It possesses a surplus of copper and base metals. Because it geared its industry to war ahead of the United States, it is in a position to supply us with Bren machine guns, scout cars, range finders, and other war supplies. Old Hurricane airplane models, outmoded for European use, are being sold to the United States and passed on, via the lease-lend route, to China.

It seems very improbable that this more intimate contact between the two predominantly English-speaking countries of North America will or can cease with the coming of peace. Exploratory work as to the possibility of maintaining various forms of permanent economic coöperation is already being carried on by several groups, both official and unofficial.

V

In building up war industry Canada's experiences have been very much like our own. The greatest success has perhaps been achieved in the output of military vehicles, where there was the

mass-production experience of the Canadian branches of Ford and General Motors and Chrysler to draw on. The greatest difficulties have been encountered with tanks and airplanes.

In shifting over from a peace to a war economy, Canada's experiences have been quite similar to those of the United States. Deprivations have been more severe. Priorities and price controls, drastic taxation and pressure for sales of war bonds, have been freely employed to lay the spectre of inflation. The war is beginning to hit the middle class fairly hard. A Canadian economic publication recently estimated that a family with a \$5000 income would now require \$6588 to maintain the same standard of living. Taxes alone for such a family, with two children, would have risen from \$118 to \$735.

Yet a danger of inflation remains because of the expansion of payrolls, combined with the diversion of plant from civilian to military production. Anxious eyes are turned toward Washington, and an American in Canada is often asked whether Mr. Henderson and his associates can keep prices under control. Any upsurge of price indices in the United States would have swift and disastrous repercussions in Canada.

Canada has made two interesting experiments in promoting wartime industrial tranquillity. Strikes have not been outlawed; but it is illegal to call a strike in a war industry until a government board of mediation has handed down an opinion on the dispute. Persons who call illegal strikes or who are suspected of Communist affiliations are often placed in internment camps without public trial.

There has been an attempt to stabilize real wages by establishing a cost-of-living bonus scheme under which a wage increase becomes automatic if the official index reveals a rise in the cost of living. Strikes still do take place, sometimes because mediation boards are slow in functioning, sometimes because the

decisions are not acceptable to one side or the other. But Canada has experienced far fewer strikes, in proportion to the number of workers, than the United States. Figures for the first six months of 1941 show the loss of time per 10,000 workers as 54 days in Canada, 381 in the United States. The cost-of-living bonus is useful while prices are kept fairly steady. But it might easily break down in the event of a serious inflationary trend.

Canada has been free from the curse of the jurisdictional strike, although a bitter factional feud inside one union caused the loss of 750,000 tons of badly needed coal in Cape Breton during the last year. The CIO and A. F. of L. feud has been only faintly reflected in Canada, where the two main labor organizations, the Trades and Labor Congress (with A. F. of L. affiliations) and the Canadian Congress of Labor (which includes some CIO unions), have refrained as a rule from poaching on each other's organizing preserves.

War is an enormous accelerator of political, social, and economic change. It is the greatest conceivable revolutionary dynamo. And this war, I believe, will exert a profound effect upon the course of United States-Canadian relations, which have long floated over waters of placid friendliness, broken by an occasional squall or ruffle.

It is almost unthinkable, even in the event of a complete British victory, that the integration of Canadian and United States economies which has already gone so far could be undone without disastrous shocks to both countries. Should there be a British defeat or a compromise peace, — which many observers would regard as the same thing, — the pressure of circumstances, always so much stronger than that of theoretical propaganda, would almost certainly force these two neighbors into a North American coalition. And such a coalition might well become the first practical experiment in Union Now.

RADIO: KEY TO NATIONAL UNITY

BY ROBERT J. LANDRY

I

OUR radio networks had taken the precaution of spotting reporter representatives throughout the Orient, and in the excited days that followed Pearl Harbor they were organized to jump about Asia with their characteristic snappiness. We will now take you, voices kept saying, to Chungking, to Batavia, to Sydney, to Singapore. Stand by, please, for an air raid on Manila, exclusive to this network. Our Mr. Cecil Brown has just jumped off the *Repulse*. He will now tell you the situation in Malaya. It was a good story.

Then, abruptly, censorship came down like a mist over everything. The event was over; the war was on. Radio soon understood that it was to suppress for the duration its congenital eagerness to convert all important public occasions into a blow-by-blow description. Showmanship in matters of life and death was unnecessary. To the military mind there is a right way and a wrong way to tell the populace that enemy aircraft are approaching and that tonight, kiddies, we have some bad news for you.

In decency to one's nerves, listening to war news should be confined on ordinary days to stated periods, one or two at most. Emotional shocks are bad enough, but to repeat them needlessly every hour on the hour is neurotic. Many Americans fought the Battle of France and the Battle of London with their stomachs, endangering their digestion without helping either France or the RAF. Naturally, should air raids threaten or other

crises arise, attention to radio is imperative.

In any country at war the radio system has a very special rôle when the awful moments come. We have problems of language and ignorance and dangers of fifth columnism that the British did not have. In days of tension the radio will incessantly instruct, order, explain, beguile. Its function then will be to bring out and adapt to war conditions the conspicuous talent for first aid which radio has often demonstrated, notably in the Ohio River floods of some years ago.

The radio commentator in the United States has by now become a national habit. We have venerated most of the merchants of supposed 'inside stuff,' even hailing some of them as soothsayers. Our awe created a lush market in which some commentators commanded from \$1000 to \$4000 a week and still do. After August 1939 these commentators began to take over our thinking, and we, as a people, were lazily agreeable. But there developed in the true crises a strange phenomenon. When the outlook was really bad, it was not always the masterminds who revealed unshakable confidence in the ultimate victory of democracy. It was, oddly enough, the ordinary simple folk. On these days they did not parrot the commentators. They ignored them.

We can still recall the panicky, headlong melancholia that seized some of the olympians during the painful weeks of May and June 1940: predictions were

then broadcast that England's survival was a matter of from three to seven weeks. We shall, after this war, have many kinds of reactions. One may well be against the \$1000 a week tea-leaf readers.

A highly regarded and undoubtedly gifted man who writes and broadcasts consistently at big fees has indulged throughout the war in a rampant defeatism oddly at variance with his declared sentiments. In suppressing in himself all so-called wishful thinking, he has managed quite frequently to sound as a Nazi operative would wish a man of his influence to sound. With the fiasco at Pearl Harbor he was again awash in pessimism, again doing his pro-democracy best to convict democracy of hopeless inefficiency. Criticism of a war government is necessary and good. But the sincere, constructive critic is at one with the government in a common assumption that victory is possible. What can be said of the radio commentators who, after Pearl Harbor, lamented to each other, 'Gus, old boy, this is our Dunkirk'? Or of the radio military experts who three weeks earlier told us the Japs were weak and wobbly?

A swift ebb and flow of public morale is not wanted by the authorities in this war or any war. Radio can do much to even out the emotional reactions of the populace: its major contribution to morale is simply to bring out and focus the talents and techniques which already exist. The indispensable know-how largely belongs to commercial broadcasting. For this reason, if for no other, it is possible to predict that our radio programs in wartime will not differ radically from our radio programs in peacetime. There will probably be marked self-restraint in the amount, nature, and proximity to war news of advertising. Public opinion should rid us of 'Use Gillette blades, save steel, and help win the war' or 'This is a crucial year in which personal appearance counts — so use Kreml.'

II

The Government will systematically exploit radio. The Treasury Department is now doing so on a large scale through an extensive radio publicity division in Washington almost entirely manned by men and women from commercial radio and, significantly, not covered or cramped by civil service. The Treasury puts great stress upon radio advertising to sell its war stamps and bonds. Radio especially is a blessing in reaching the remote farms and areas that were a problem in the last war to the Liberty Loan salesmen.

What the Treasury does, other departments will emulate. The entire purpose is to borrow and exploit the facilities and know-how of the broadcasting industry, not to attempt any spectacular production or policy innovations. The gala broadcasts for the Red Cross and other drives are simply elaborations of the familiar advertising revues.

There is some tendency in the United States to feel that because British radio went all-out immediately for the war effort in 1939, forgetting all else in the process, this is the right way and our American policy of remaining near normal is somehow slack. This is a perversion of the fact. BBC's total war record will undoubtedly be very commendable, but its early start was marked by confusion, by a sudden acceleration of mediocrity on the air, and by an unmistakable hint of shakiness in officialdom.

I was in England in September 1939 and was able to watch various phases of the switchover. A wartime system of rather involved engineering, employing unexpected shifts of the points of broadcast origin, was immediately instituted — all part of a strategy of deception for a small country located close to the enemy. There was the danger that broadcast signals might provide geographic information for flyers. Part of the BBC staff was scattered in units; groups of actors, musicians, announcers,

engineers were billeted in obscure English and Scotch villages. The whole British system was converted into an underground network, in part literally so, with broadcasts from subterranean studios.

The British public had, of course, avidly followed the BBC news periods, notably at 6 P.M. and at 11 P.M., all through that nervous month of August. I sat in the garden foyer of a Midlands hotel on the evening when news of the sinking of the *Athenia* came through. I recall the toneless voice of the announcer as he delivered his message of horror, and I recall even more vividly the well-mannered hotel guests listening at the proprietor's wireless with hardly a mark, save of deepened reserve, to testify of any reaction to the news. A lady who was a teetotaler thought she might like some whiskey and soda, small, please. Otherwise nothing.

But of course they were all of them twitching and feeling it inside. The ritual of tuning in for the Government's communiqués had created, all through the various English counties I visited, a curious though not immediately apparent type of anxiety neurosis, all the more tense because British decorum then allowed few vents for emotion. Britain was almost literally living for, and counting the minutes until, the wireless news.

The Government imposed an absolute censorship on news. This revealed itself most glaringly in the identical wording of war stories in the afternoon newspapers with BBC bulletins of the night before. Naturally, inside a week the press lords were yelling with genuine anguish at the denial of the privilege of rewrite and at the general blackout of information except for the carefully measured official daily allotment.

Hypnosis by radio receiver could not last. It was unhealthy to hang on words over the air that had been repeated an hour before and would be repeated nearly every hour the rest of the day and part of the next besides reappearing, dressed up

with captions, in the press. Soon letters began appearing in the *Times* complaining that this would become the Bore War. Margot Asquith recalled that dullness had been one of the greatest burdens of the last war. Englishmen hoped that the BBC would enliven its programs and that the Government would liberalize its news handouts.

In due time the British restored gaiety to the air. Morale demanded it. The BBC's congenital conservatism, especially on the Sabbath was short-cut by eventually creating a special separate radio program service for the troops. A good deal of frivolity and music hall indigo could be excused the soldiers. This was especially persuasive as an excuse in the period in which there was a BEF in France.

In England as in the United States the people demand that the rights of debate and criticism shall not be extinguished in wartime. We wish only as much censorship as winning the victory demands. In the nature of wartime confusion and of military distaste for civilian 'interference,' we are likely to get more censorship on occasion than is really necessary. We can argue about it after we win the war.

III

There are 915 radio stations in the United States, ranging from small-town 100-watters to big-town 50,000-watters. Perhaps two thirds of the stations of all sizes are affiliated with national or regional networks. The hookup is the key to national unity, and one new wartime morale program is looping four national networks and 550 stations together once a week. To tune in America's stations the owners of some 50,000,000 radio receivers consume an estimated \$200,000,000 annually in electrical energy. National advertising is only one source of support to the radio industry, but its \$100,000,000 a year does constitute the cantilever arch from which swing all the better radio programs which in turn

determine the tone and character of privately licensed and financed broadcasting.

Our system is a going concern of high average efficiency. The industry is conspicuous in war activities of all kinds, among them recruiting for the armed forces — Air Cadets, Coast Guard, Army, Navy — and for radio technicians. Radio directly participates in civilian defense, in the training of victory speakers, this war's equivalent of the Minute Men of the last war. Yet paradoxically NBC and CBS, the two leading broadcast organizations, turn aside from their multiple collaborations with the White House and other sources of authority to damn, and be damned in return by, the Federal Communications Commission. Within a fortnight of Pearl Harbor NBC and CBS were in a New York court seeking to enjoin the FCC from enforcement of certain 'arbitrary orders' originally dated May 2, 1941. Later still, the Department of Justice, on behalf of the FCC, filed an action in a Chicago court designed to compel NBC and CBS to accept these orders through the legal device of a consent decree.

Neither side in this businessman-bureaucrat feud was prepared to accept a truce on the private fight in order to concentrate on the war. The FCC continued to insist that its orders were necessary to break up 'monopoly,' and pointed to the endorsement of the orders by the younger Mutual network.

NBC and CBS have accepted as 'hints' some of the FCC's points. For example, the Radio Corporation of America, chief pioneer of the industry, has already separated the NBC Red and NBC Blue networks, thereby preparing the legal and organizational groundwork for eventual disposal, if required, of one of them. The FCC demand which is most obnoxious to network management strikes at the right of the networks to make contracts on an exclusive basis for all, or nearly all, of the radio time of

member stations. The network management feels that the abolition of this legal right and the insistence that local stations be free to accept or reject programs will shatter the whole structure of contractual guarantees which make networks, as such, possible. The FCC shrugs off this claim.

The Mutual network, whose leadership comes largely from the *Chicago Tribune* (WGN) and Macy's department store (WOR), has survived and fought as an 'independent' and sided with the FCC against NBC and CBS much in the same spirit that it broke with NBC and CBS and signed with the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers during another bitter trade war of 1941. Most of the radio industry had united to 'lock out' ASCAP. Mutual joined the movement but negotiated a separate peace months before the others.

At the St. Louis convention of the National Association of Broadcasters in May 1941, Chairman James L. Fly of the FCC, a guest of the convention, was given less than a generously fair hearing. Storming out of the convention, he declared to the press that the radio trade association 'shined and smelled like a mackerel in the moonlight.' The lingering echoes of such clashes of personality and points of view were still too strong to be submerged in the first Japanese visit. However, time and proddings to unity are already getting in their sedative effects, and despite the New York and Chicago court actions it may be predicted that during 1942 some sort of compromise will be patched up.

IV

A healthy respect for the ingenuity of spies and saboteurs prompted immediate precautions in America against certain types of participation programs lest the innocent-seeming question or answer be a code. Some 55,000 amateur short-wave operators were ordered off the air to prevent enemy agents creeping in

among them. The Army and the Navy are especially alert against faked official instructions, manufactured panic, false alarms that generate confusion. The vivid recent example of Belgium and France with their clogged roads and headlong panic is a constant nightmare to the military mind. Soldiers know something, moreover, of the hysterical temperament of our polyglot populations in the big cities and of the deplorable, but human, tendency to half-listen and to half-understand what is heard on the radio, and to fill out the story with unfounded speculation.

It was at once made mandatory that all announcers on duty with or near the forces be fingerprinted, mugged, investigated for patriotism, and 'accredited' in the manner adopted for reporters covering the White House. Only badge-wearing, credential-bearing, uniformed announcers and radio engineers will be allowed in or near theatres of military and naval operations, and they will always be under Intelligence Officer chaperonage.

Men of imagination and responsibility in the American radio trade knew from experience the dangers of improper and thoughtless use of their information-giving, mood-creating apparatus. Such radio men did not fear, but rather quickly urged, stringency in censorship. They have gladly agreed that wartime censorship must be harder upon radio because of its boundary-leaping character than upon the press. Wise radio men realize that, as a matter of conscience alone, wartime censorship is a workaday need of the broadcaster as it is an indispensable protection to the nation. The mature radio viewpoint was well expressed only a few days before Pearl Harbor by CBS's homecoming London representative, Edward R. Murrow, who told a banquet audience at the Waldorf-Astoria that he, for one, would flatly refuse to newscast from a belligerent country that lacked an adequate system of censorship, since in the absence of such a system he might

innocently jeopardize lives. The enemy is always a devoted fan of one's program.

It was not strict censorship, but loose and, what is worse, multiple censorship and bureaucratic red tape, that American radio men feared. From the first hour, they yearned to be told what to do and what not to do. But they wanted uncontradictable authority. They weren't sure who came first, the Office of Censorship, the Defense Communications Board, the Federal Communications Commission, the White House secretariat, or the Army Interceptor Commands.

V

Radio leaders have an overwhelming interest in the official attitude on morale, but they cannot assume to exercise or delineate the grand strategy. The probable job of radio will be the restatement, or showmanlike projection, of the official propaganda line, using radio's own inspiration more or less. Radio may also form partnerships with private morale experts delegated by the Government to stand by and improvise both short-term and long-term expedients.

Such morale planning groups, of whatever nature they may be, will have certain basic decisions to make. Among them will be the question of how much we need to hate our enemies in order to persevere until their downfall. Even now the typical American idealist is often more distressed by the failure of our allies, the British, to promise contingent freedom to backward India than by the possible German destruction of that very country. In the view of some people radio should come out for, say, the submerged third, the sharecroppers, the unhappy Negroes, slum clearance, planned economy, a world worth having for the cost this war will exact. Now, say these excited minds, is the great opportunity for radio. It has the voice. Let it speak. It has the miles of telephone lines, the organized audience. Let it prove itself the new leader of democracy.

All these expectations of progress at a gallop are nonsense. Radio is not like that, and could never be, except by a delegation of absolute authority to a tight little group of ultraliberals, a contingency as unlikely as it would be undesirable. Democracy must protect and guard radio, not vice versa. This is true in war as in peace. Our radio will not remain democratic twenty-four hours if we ever go fascist. Let's get the simple facts straight. We have a democratic kind of radio because we are a democratic kind of society.

Generally speaking, radio is our most consistently conservative medium. It is obliged to be. Programs cannot blurt out emotional discharges which might seriously injure morale. NBC and CBS have adhered to their policies of not permitting spy-and-sabotage melodrama in fiction form. A CBS executive vetoed a radio version of the stage play, *The Wookey*, because of the extremely realistic sound effects of air raids which were an integral part of the drama. In short, what was permissible in a theatre had to be regarded as dynamite for radio.

The war did release radio commentators from many of their previous restraints so that they are now frankly editorializing against our enemies; but, unless there is a drastic and now unforeseeable shift of viewpoint upon the importance of avoiding violence to racial groups and to civil liberties, there will be no Injun whoops around the campfires.

Radio management is not without its idiosyncrasies. The industry is now free, but perhaps not yet accustomed to being free, of the long farce of pretended neutrality during which it developed an elaborate etiquette of denying that radio itself took any concern in the problems of democracy beyond the concern of an umpire. Network and station executives have long been saying 'We cannot allow that — it's emotional' or 'You cannot say that unless the opposite point of

view is allowed an immediate rebuttal.' Radio industry policy looked to (1) dispassionate reporting of the news by the radio organizations themselves, and (2) balanced discussion of controversies implicit in this news. In the scheduling of 'talks' the networks were slightly obsessed with fears of senatorial attacks.

Today radio must do a more creative job. Yet thoughtful persons fear, with cause, an emotional bender creating a hysteria hangover as in 1919 when a disillusioned and apathetic public opinion, overdosed on atrocity exaggerations, reacted by creating a cynical climate and the tragedy of Woodrow Wilson.

We also need to consider that laughter, a specialty of entertainers, not morale experts, must not be sacrificed in the effort to create a high spiritual tone. It is imperative that people shall be able to laugh at the little everyday bumps and annoyances that war brings. And we need to remember that there is a natural saturation point for programs reminding us of the eternal verities imbedded in our Constitution. The human mind wanders rather soon in the presence of abstractions.

The great power for progress implicit in radio was summed up on December 2, 1941, by the Librarian of Congress, Archibald MacLeish, when he pointed out that radio had annihilated time and distance and 'the ignorant superstition that violence and lies and murder on another continent are not violence and lies and murder here.' But another equally challenging side of the radio problem was illustrated five days later during the play-by-play description of a Sunday afternoon professional football game over WOR, New York. An excited announcer broke in several times in rapid succession with news flashes that violence and lies and murder had struck at our own Pearl Harbor. Whereupon quite a large number of annoyed listeners telephoned WOR to demand that it stop interrupting the football game.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

'LA CUISINE CREOLE'

THRICE lucky is the lover of good food whose library can boast a copy of Lafcadio Hearn's wonderful cookbook, *La Cuisine Creole*, one of the best and certainly the rarest of American works on this most fascinating of all subjects. Only two copies, both in poor condition, have turned up at auction in the past quarter of a century. Neither the British Museum nor the Bibliothèque Nationale has the book on its shelves.

Cooking was a minor hobby with Hearn, and he had begun collecting Creole recipes when on the *New Orleans Item*. He was mainly interested, however, in Creole patois, spoken in Louisiana and throughout the West Indies, and had compiled a Dictionary of Creole Proverbs, with translations in French and English, under the title *Gombo Zhebes*, meaning 'Soup of Herbs.' There was no demand, nor even a market, for any such thing, and one publisher after another turned it down. Finally he appealed to a Mr. Will H. Coleman, whom he had known when working as a newspaper man in New York and who had a bookselling and publishing business in the old Astor House on Broadway.

Coleman wasn't interested in the Creole Proverbs, but when Hearn mentioned the cookbook he offered to publish *Gombo Zhebes* if Hearn would let him have his cooking recipes. These were hurriedly put in shape for publication and both books were published in 1885, bound in the same brown cloth, with front covers gilt. *La Cuisine Creole* has the title in gilt lettering with the capitals in black, a gilt design showing the kind of soup tureen used for serving Gombo, and a base ornament in black with a crab and a crayfish. *Gombo Zhebes* was published under Hearn's name, but *La Cuisine Creole* was put out anonymously, as if it had been a compilation of recipes by the publisher. Indeed it appears under Coleman's name in the catalogue of the Library of Congress, although correctly listed among Hearn's works by the New York Public Library and Book Prices Current.

The title page describes *La Cuisine Creole*

as 'A Collection of Culinary Recipes from leading Chefs and noted Creole housewives, who have made New Orleans famous for its Cuisine.' The 'leading Chefs' were the two Alciatores, one the famous Antoine, whose restaurant on St. Louis Street is still an unsurpassed haven for leisurely dining; the other, the proprietor of the Restaurant de la Louisianne. In those days, Antoine's was the equal of any eating place in Paris, but Oysters à la Rockefeller had not been thought of and the cuisine was exclusively French, in keeping with the somewhat austere dining room that looks just like a Paris restaurant of fifty years ago.

One of Antoine's specialties was Red Snapper à la Chambord, which Hearn describes in his chapter on Chefs d'Oeuvre; but it was the other Alciatoire, a cousin if my memory serves me, just arrived from Paris, where he had worked with Bignon, who gave him the famous recipe for Queen Victoria's favorite pea soup. Despite the fact that *La Cuisine Creole* is chock-full of culinary lore and, in contrast to the average cookbook, written in clear, concise, and delightfully harmonious language, its publication seems to have passed almost without notice, as did a second edition reprinted in New Orleans a few years later.

It is difficult to choose from the 260 pages of hints and recipes, but I have used my copy steadily for more years than I care to remember, and the following are my favorites, the technique merely brought up to date.

First there is the green pea soup said to have been Queen Victoria's favorite. It may well be so, as Bignon once worked in the kitchens of Buckingham Palace. It is certainly as nice a green pea soup as anyone can wish for. Take two quarts of shelled green peas, a double handful of parsley, four stalks of mint, and a good handful of young spring onions. Have ready two quarts of veal stock made from two pounds of lean veal and a calf's foot, well strained and clarified. Place this on the fire, and just before it boils throw in the peas, parsley, mint, and onions. Let all boil together, and when well done take them out with a strainer, put in a mortar, and pound well together. Then

put them back in the liquor, bring to a boil once more, and run your soup through a fine hair sieve. Reheat, add half a pound of fresh butter and a tablespoonful of sugar. Beat well in the tureen and serve with little cubes of fried bread.

Everyone knows what a vast improvement egg balls are to almost any soup, but especially to clear chicken consommé, tomato, or mock-turtle. Yet few cooks know how to prepare them. Nothing could be easier. You make a paste out of the yolks of four cold hard-boiled eggs and the whites of two raw ones. This paste must be worked till it is absolutely smooth. Make it into balls the size of a small marble, roll them in sifted flour, fry carefully in butter, and drop them into the soup.

The book is full of simple but delicious preparations. An unexpected guest may drop in for luncheon, or you may bring home somebody for a light after-the-theatre supper. Here is a snack that is hard to beat; it is easy to make and unique. Whip the yolk of an egg with a spoonful of milk, set it on the fire to warm, and thicken it with grated ham. Let it simmer a few minutes and spread on hot buttered toast. The addition of a drop of tabasco is an improvement.

Have you ever eaten pork and peaches? In his chapter on sauces and accompaniments, Hearn gives this very striking recipe that I have never seen in any other cookbook, although I had some 450 of them in my library in Paris. Fried peaches are simply wonderful as a garniture for a roast of pork. All you have to do is to roast a nice piece of pork — a leg with plenty of crackle for preference, but a rib roast or a small shoulder will do almost as well — and, a few minutes before your roast is ready, peel your peaches, cut them in halves, and let them cook in the pork fat. Serve them all round the meat. They are wonderful — so wonderful that you will do well to allow three peaches per person.

Another unusual dish to serve at luncheon, a dish that will keep even experts guessing, is a sugar-cured leg of lamb or mutton. A leg weighing about five or six pounds will do nicely. Carefully remove all skin and superfluous fat, rub it well all over with plenty of brown sugar dry, place it in a deep close-fitting dish, and for each pound of sugar add a pint of ordinary red wine and a pint of wine vinegar. Soak the leg well and let it

lie in this gooey sweet pickle three or four days, turning it over morning and evening. When it is wanted, rinse it under cold running water, wipe it very dry, and roast it in a brisk oven. If there is any left over it will make a splendid pie. But you will have a lot of fun when your guests begin to wonder what it is they are eating. One distinguished African traveler assured me it was antelope; at other times I have been complimented on the fine young boar. Cranberry sauce and a purée of chestnuts are the proper garniture.

Here is another luxury dish that Hearn describes as 'a good substitute for oysters during the hot season' — fritters made from grated corn. Boil a dozen ears of young sweet corn, and when cool grate enough to make a pint. Beat three eggs with a cup of milk or cream, — by all means cream, if you have it, — add your pint of grated corn, dredge in just enough flour to make a batter that will drop from a spoon, salt and pepper to taste. Beat your batter very hard — it must be absolutely smooth — and then drop into boiling lard one spoonful at a time. No one who has not tried these can believe how different they are from ordinary corn fritters. They may be cooked three or four at a time in melted butter in an ordinary frying pan.

Perhaps the most unusual of the corn recipes is the following. Melt a cupful of lard in a frying pan, and when it is hot, but not sizzling, pour in a pint of sliced okra. Let it cook very gently. Then add a pint and a half of sweet corn cut from the cob and allow it to simmer with the okra until thoroughly cooked. Pour off some of the fat, dredge in a little flour, stir well, adding half a cup of thick cream, pepper and salt to taste, and serve hot.

And now for Red Snapper à la Chambord. Clean your fish and be careful not to damage it. Replace the roe. Take off the scales and lightly raise the skin on one side, and lard it with bacon from fin to tail. Put it in a pan and moisten with white wine. Add salt, pepper, parsley, six bay leaves, some thyme, sliced onions, and three cloves. Cover the head with strips of bacon and place in the oven, covering the fish kettle with sheets of foolscap paper and letting it simmer for one hour. When about to serve, drain it and put it on a platter, garnish it all round with force-meat balls, glazed sweetbreads, crabmeat croquettes, chicken livers, truffles, cock's combs and cock's 'kidneys.' Strain the sauce

through a hair sieve and put into a pan two spoonfuls of *sauce espagnole* and two spoonfuls of the sauce. Use this to *glacé* your fish, which must be nicely browned. Pour the rest of the sauce around the fish and serve.

One cannot help being struck by the simplicity of these recipes, but simplicity does not preclude distinction, as these potato puffs, to serve with any roast, will show. Boil seven or eight potatoes, mash them well, and add two heaping tablespoonfuls of butter, a cup of milk, and two well-beaten eggs. Beat this mixture till your arm aches, pour it into small deep moulds which should be not more than two-thirds full, and bake in a moderate oven. The moulds should, of course, be buttered right to the top.

When dinner is over, after coffee has been served, turn down the lights and bring in the *grand brûlé*, placing it in the centre of the table, surrounded by flowers. Light a match and, 'after allowing the sulphur to burn entirely off,' apply it to the brûlé, which, as it burns, will shed its weird light upon the faces of the company. As Hearn says, 'the stillness that follows gives an opportunity for thoughts that break out in ripples of laughter and pave the way for the exhilaration that is to come.' To make the brûlé you pour into a silver bowl two large wineglassfuls of French brandy, one half wineglassful of kirsch, one half wineglassful of maraschino, a small quantity of cinnamon and allspice. Put in about ten cubes of cane sugar, and when they are saturated take them out with a ladle and cover them with brandy. Ignite and return to the bowl, which should be allowed to burn about fifteen minutes. The recipe serves five people.

The *petit brûlé* makes perhaps an even more striking end to a meal, as one is placed in front of every guest. Take an ordinary rather thick-skinned orange. Cut through the peel entirely round the orange, like the line of the equator. Pass the handle of a spoon between the pulp and the peel and gradually separate the peel so as to form a cup. Treat the other half peel in the same way, and you will be able to stand the orange on one cup and in the other place two lumps of sugar and a trace of cinnamon, and fill with good brandy. Ignite the brandy, and when burned out it will be found to have a delicious flavor imparted by the skin of the orange.

HENRY NOBLE HALL

THE HERMIT HARE

THE clover songs you sow across the Spring
Will find my heart, the hidden hermit hare,
I know — and she will quake, encountering
Their sweetness in the tunnels of her lair.
Alone with silence, she can scarce ignore
For long, the throb of roots above her arc,
But lured, reluctant, to her skyward door,
Inquisitive, will sniff, and peer, and hark.

But should you spy two listening blades of fur
Above the hillock, do not claim her yet,
Nor deem you have so soon emboldened her:
She has an Autumn terror to forget;
And singing is a young and slender sound
To blur the hungry hoarseness of the hound.

VIRGINIA FRENCH

THE EVERLASTING ORPHAN

A POET some day may create for posterity
the tale of a martial steel vehicle worthy to
be remembered along with Bucephalus. In
the meantime this garland is braided for a
stumpy four-wheeler of exceptional endurance
in the works of peace.

In the dull year 1922, at the tag end of
Depression I originating in World War I,
an honest little automobile company in
Michigan quietly surrendered. We bought
one of its last cars cheap as an orphaned child
of industry. A classy runabout in gray-green,
with the latest straight-edge tires, real leather
upholstery, and a weight of 4125 pounds, it
was the heaviest passenger car of its size then
manufactured and a forerunner of the midget
tank of today.

After two or three years of rapid improvement
in motor design, driving this little
heavyweight came to be no fun at all. It was
a rough rider, expensive to fuel, hard to steer,
and required half a block for turning around;
neither strength nor science could park the
stubborn vehicle in less than three times its
own length, curbside. It squealed and grumbled
continuously, no matter how often it was
greased. Wherefore we called it the Flying
Dutchman, not so much because of its speed
as because we lived in a Dutch backwater
of the Hudson Valley. Since it had little
trade-in value, although undamaged, we put
it to work as a depot wagon.

Depot wagons weren't stylish then; strictly
service vehicles, they were expected to look
the part and did. We bought a mail-order

body, which looked like a boxcar when the celluloid windows were drawn, bolted it on that densest of frames, and packed the children in it when they were ready for school. Four little girls they were then, the youngest with her hair in curls and the oldest with her hair in pigtails. Now all four of them have families, and their children beg for rides on the old bus — but I get ahead of my story.

When a depot wagon begins to slip, it sinks rapidly from department-store parcels to groceries, potatoes, lime for the tennis court, feed for the chickens, wood, coal, ashes, fertilizer, and, on our puny kind of farm, eventually the grosser livestock. You begin, innocently, with a pet lamb, practically housebroken, and then presently you are harboring for transport all sorts of animals in all manner of emotional states. Our sequence ran, as I recall, sheep, goat, pig, calf. After that experience the veteran was retired from passenger service and consigned to freight, mostly earth crops cased in mud. During this phase the Dutchman grew continually noisier, so we called him Rip Van Dam after a most explosive lieutenant governor of colonial New York who, except for a couple of centuries, might have been a close neighbor.

A good many veterans retired from active service in 1929, and Rip Van Dam was one of them. Come spring of '30, there didn't seem much sense in taking him out of the open shed that had served as winter quarters. Farm prices had sunk to the point where the less one raised the better, and there were no surplus funds to defray licensing the veteran. So we just left the old bus as it was, where it was, and forgot all about it. Didn't even jack up the frame to take the weight off the tires.

Winter and summer, spring and fall, Rip stood there unmoved and almost untouched for ten long years. Once a junk man discovered the derelict while nosing around the place and offered five dollars for it. Only sentiment kept me from selling.

A little later Mr. Morris signed on with us as hired man. In his varied career Mr. Morris had been a farmer and likewise a taxi driver. His ideal of agriculture was a judicious combination of both pursuits. In typical American fashion he resented handwork and enjoyed harnessing motive power and machine tools; so operating, he considers himself as a mechanic rather than a laborer. This trait I discovered when I saw that he went gayly

to hedge cutting as soon as we bought an electric shear, after being downright laggard in getting at it with hand shears.

One day Mr. Morris came in all excited to report that he had found an old car behind a pile of boards. I told him Rip's long, sad history, but he would not be dismayed. 'Just what we need,' he declared, 'for moving stuff around the place. I turned her over sweet and easy as you please. If I can have some new spark plugs and a battery —'

Within a week and for less than ten dollars, Rip Van Dam rolled out of his ten-year lair under his own power and on his old tires. We refuse to bet a license on this miracle, but hardly a day passes that this resurrected vehicle does not charge explosively along our lanes. In addition to carrying everything from tin cans to pianos, it has pulled on occasion plough, harrow, and stoneboat.

A few of Rip's appurtenances failed to respond. The speedometer is out of whack forever, having stopped at 60,000 miles long, long before this deathless motorcar entered upon its long sleep. It has no lights or horn and needs neither because honest farmers work only by daylight and Rip stays on the place. If a tire ever gives out, we may never be able to shoe him again. So on January 1, 1942, we hoisted Rip up on jacks for a rest until spring; but in 1942 he was stabled with more honors and attention than in 1929. This spring he will be twenty years old. During half of his life he merely rusted, which as every mechanic knows is worse for a machine than work. Notwithstanding all this action and inaction, Mr. Morris says that Rip is good for another twenty years if well and truly handled on our simple plan of home-lot travel. In 1962, accordingly, another bulletin will be issued on the life and works of this indestructible mechanism.

ARTHUR POUND

PAUL REVERE, IN REVERSE

SUPPOSE the shade of Paul Revere,
In case it ever happened here,
Contrived to hang his signal lights
From old North Church on blackout nights;
One, if by land, and two, if by sea —
Worse if, by air, he should make it three;
Air Wardens then would shout at him:
'Paul, for God's sake, douse that glim!'

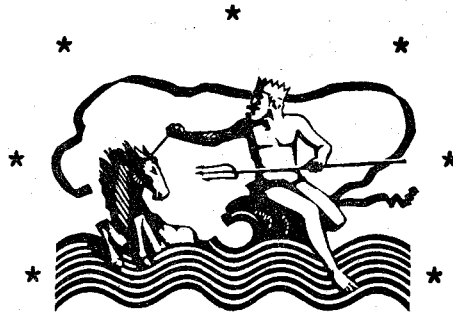
ARTHUR W. BELL

THE NEW ATLANTIC SERIAL

THE Children

BY NINA FEDOROVA

AUTHOR OF THE \$10,000 PRIZE NOVEL, THE FAMILY



CHAPTERS XIII-XIX



THE Children

BY NINA FEDOROVA



THE AUTHOR: Nina Fedorova, the Atlantic Prize novelist, was born in South Russia. Her parents were of the intelligentsia, and after the Revolution she and her family became part of the exile movement which flowed across Siberia into Manchuria and thence to China. In 1938 she and her husband and her two sons crossed the Pacific to make a fresh start as American citizens in the university town of Eugene, Oregon. There she wrote her first novel, *The Family*, which in 1940 was awarded the Atlantic Prize of \$10,000.

THE NOVEL: This is the story of Russian exiles in China in the year 1938 — of parents and young people living on the ragged edge of poverty with only the strands of family affection to hold them together. As the book opens, Lida, a young girl with a lovely voice, is making ready for her first concert in Tientsin. Her voice has been trained (without fee) by Madame Manuilova, a faded but once famous opera singer; if the girl does well in this amateur performance, her teacher has promised to take her on to Harbin for professional engagements.

Lida and her mother share an attic together. Mother supports them on her slender earnings as a nurse, but her duties at the hospital prevent her attending Lida's debut. The girl is taken to the concert by their landlord, Count Diaz. At the hall they are joined by Leon, the Count's son, and he, with the rest of the audience, is swept off his feet by the fresh and appealing beauty of Lida's singing. The girl is walking on air, but she is brought down to earth when, to her embarrassment, Leon proposes to her. Caught up as she is by the ecstasy of her music and the remembrance of her American lover, Jimmy, the girl turns him down in innocent cruelty.

The trip to Harbin is now assured. Lida and her teacher make the three-day journey in the company of the kindly American, Mr. Rind. In Harbin, Lida finds a home with the large and affectionate Platov family.

Mr. Rind goes first to apply for his Russian visa, and the Consul at once offers to send him a translator who can help him read the local newspapers; so there comes to him the young girl Dasha — eager, intelligent, and devoted to the communist cause. Between these two lonely people so oddly contrasted, there grows an exquisite friendship.

THE CHILDREN

BY NINA FEDOROVA

XIII

MR. RIND,' Lida said, 'could you ever guess whom I met today?'

Lida saw Mr. Rind almost daily when she went to the hotel to call on Mme. Manuilova. And now they were all sitting in the lounge.

'How can I guess?' he answered. 'There are many people whom you could meet, and then only very few whom we both know.'

'I met that poor Armenian woman we saw on the train.'

'Well . . . what is she doing now?'

'She does not know what to do with her three boys. She has never been trained to do anything except keep house, and the boys can't earn their living . . .'

'Why can't they?'

'Oh, Mr. Rind,' a reproach was in Lida's voice, 'they're too young—twelve, ten, and four.'

'Well, what is she planning to do?'

Lida looked around suspiciously, then bent to Mr. Rind's ear and whispered:—

'She plans to give the two oldest to the communists.'

'What?'

'To let them be communists . . . Then they will go to Soviet Russia for their schooling.'

'But there must be some principles . . .' Mr. Rind said.

'“Principles are for richer people,”’ Lida cried. ‘“First you eat, then you remember you have principles.” That is just what the Armenian said. Oh, Mr. Rind, let us go and see her! She invited

us to celebrate their Christmas with them.'

'When is it?'

'The woman does not know exactly. But they have a ritual. The priest must come and announce that Christ was born, otherwise He could not be . . .'

'But the woman? How is she?'

'She is waiting for the birth of Christ, and she is fasting . . . Oh, she is so thin, so weak, so exhausted . . .' Lida's eyes were sparkling with tears. 'She can die before He would be born.'

'Couldn't she start eating?'

'To *break the fast*? Never! Never! Other people can do that, *she*—*never*. She would rather die, she said . . . and, Mr. Rind, she asked me to come and celebrate with her . . . let us go! Mr. Rind, let us go! You know, then she can eat everything and we could, perhaps, bring her something nice for supper.'

Mr. Rind meekly said:—

'When shall we go?'

'In the evening, around ten o'clock.'

'Why so late?'

'Her Christmas begins at night.'

There was nothing to say to that, and the visit was agreed upon.

At ten o'clock of the same evening Mr. Rind and Lida went to see the poor Armenian woman, whose name was Haikanush. She had a small room, full of things of dubious age and value. She wore a black dress and a black shawl that hid the upper as well as the lower part of her face; only the eyes and nose

were exposed to the observer. But those eyes were a picture in themselves, testimony of an uneven struggle against misfortunes; of tears — shed in loneliness; of hopes deceived, of dreams broken, of expectance betrayed; and finally, of a peculiar *strength* which comes out of desolation and despair only, and is often stronger than any other strength.

Her three boys were sitting motionlessly and mournfully in the three corners. A table covered with a snow-white napkin stood in the middle of the room.

As soon as the guests came and were seated, the woman extinguished all the lights.

‘This is their custom,’ Lida whispered. ‘They lived for ages under the Turks and had to celebrate their holidays in the greatest secrecy or else they would be simply killed on the spot.’

For a while they sat in silence and darkness. A strange feeling entered Mr. Rind’s soul, too. It seemed that while they were sitting thus, in darkness, something was being prepared for them — something of the greatest joy, felicity, and blessedness.

It was so easy to believe, there in that darkness, that mysteries did exist and miracles did go their rounds.

Suddenly a cautious knock was heard at the door. A movement, hasty cautious steps — and the woman opened the door. Several dark and silent figures slid into the room, and noiselessly the door was shut. Nobody said a word. A match was struck and Mr. Rind saw a tall man — extraordinarily tall and handsome — with dark eyes burning in a thin face with a silvery beard. Everybody had a wax candle. They lit the candles and stood in a close circle, shading the flames with their folded palms, to hide lights. Then the priest said something.

He said it simply and briefly, but it made them all start and shiver — Mr. Rind too, for he knew what the priest said. Child Christ was born, just then, just there, that very moment, among

those dark figures. He was born, in spite of all, the faith lost, the sins in full tide; in spite of the boys ready for communism; in spite of Mr. Rind and Lida’s different creed. He was born for all of them.

Then they all sang a carol. The candles were extinguished, and the visitors left to perform the same miracle at other houses.

The lights in the room were lit. Now this was another room, another woman, another mood. This was *joy*, the real joy, which is not immediately connected with temporal things, but comes as a reflection of things above.

Now Haikanush had another face, sparkling with happy tears, as if she wore diamonds of many carats and purest water.

She laid the table, and Lida helped with things she had brought.

This was a supper to remember always: the woman eating at last, with a grateful and pious expression on her face, the boys less mournful but not less silent, Lida happy to tears, and Mr. Rind — a spectator to all this.

Before they left, the woman told Lida to thank Mr. Rind and to tell him she wished him and his country happiness. Mr. Rind was curious to know how she reconciled all this — her flaming faith with the giving of her sons to a different life.

‘Master,’ she said and Lida translated, ‘my heart is broken . . . I am a lone, poor, illiterate widow left with orphans . . . Children need a strong ruling hand . . . “Mother is love, father is a rod” . . . My love is not enough. I am giving my children to those who are willing to take them, to give them bread and shelter — and the rest is left to God!’

XIV

The nineteenth of January (the sixth in the old Russian calendar) is a great holiday, that of Christ’s baptism in the

river Jordan. This day concludes the Christmas celebration and marks the climax of festivities. On the eve, according to an ancient custom, youth is busy with fortune-telling. That is the only day through the year when this occult occupation is not frowned on by the clergy, who yield, for the sake of youth's amusement, to that old pre-Christian custom which has persisted through thousands of years.

The Platov children kept the tradition, and all except Galina had questions to be asked from Fate. Glafira and Lida tried the oldest and the easiest rite. In twilight they left the house and went in different directions. When Lida saw a lonely passer-by she approached and asked timidly:—

'Would you kindly tell me the name of my bridegroom?'

'Why? Iakov, of course,' the man said laughing.

And, all shaken, Lida realized that Iakov in English meant exactly Jimmy. Her anxiety — she still had no letters — was alleviated by this single word, and she ran home all radiant from happiness.

Glafira returned in a rather vague mood. Her passer-by had just laughed at her request and said:—

'You little fox, you know very well what your bridegroom's name will be.'

Meanwhile Mme. Platova prepared a salted fritter, and all the children ate, except Galina again. This meant that, being thirsty, they would see in dreams the answer to their hearts' desires. Lida and Glafira put their combs under their pillows, to make the future bridegrooms appear and help with hair-dressing. This provoked laughter, for nowadays girls' bobbed hair does not need as much help as those knee-long blonde tresses of their grandmothers.

That night was rich in dreams, in sighs, in sounds, in whispers. Only Galina slept quietly.

Lida dreamed of Jimmy, of course, but he loomed far away. He brandished something in his hand, but it was not

her comb. Then she saw Mr. Rind, who was standing on a sea rock; pointing down to the waves, he told Lida she had to jump down and drink. But she could not, for the water was hot and salted.

She woke up to see Glafira sitting on her bed. In deep whispers the latter confessed to Lida her love. In plain words it sounded no richer than Lida's. It ran thus: Mr. Wren had come from Australia two months ago. He was of Russian origin, but with his parents' naturalization he was now a British subject, which sounded like being a prince to the girls of nations trodden upon in Asia. Mr. Wren was almost rich. People said he had come to marry a Russian girl. *All* the eligible Russian marriageable girls of Harbin were after him.

Glafira's love story was the poem of a tragic one-sided love. They met. She fell in love. He did not. He never said anything special and was often seen as an escort of the Belle of the Town. That was all.

Glafira opened her secret only to Vladimir, her brother in Shanghai — first, because they were the closest pals in the family; second, because it was not such a heavy shame to confess one's failure at a distance. Lida was the second person to share the burden.

'Believe me,' Glafira whispered, 'it is not only because he is a British subject — no! — I would love him under any conditions, for he is so . . . so lovable . . . I am stupid, or something, but I cannot fall in love with the boys around here, whom I have known so long. Love must come from the unknown . . . I love Mr. Wren because he is so gay, strong, powerful . . .' And she began to cry.

'But what am I to him? Lida, to *whom* do those young, strong, happy boys belong? *Whom* do they marry? *What* must a girl have to attract their love?'

Lida did not know, either, and they both shed many tears, happily abandoning themselves to their sorrow. Only

young girls can cry like that, only young girls in love, for there is such force in youth that even tears and sorrow taste sweet and balmy.

In the morning — whatever the dreams — all the family went to church.

After a long Mass, the religious procession with crosses, icons, and banners came out of every church building and joined in one procession to the river. The Sungari River was called the Jordan for that single day. A place for the ceremony had been duly prepared. An ice-hole had been cut to serve as a font. A splendid cross, fifteen feet high, had been hewn out of ice and perched erect on the eastern side of the font. Sculptured by an artist, the cross bore beautiful ornamental reliefs cut in ice. It sparkled splendidly. Sometimes, under direct sun rays, it threw high a pillar of dazzling light.

The air was filled with the triumphant sounds of church bells. They were heard farther on days like that, cold, still, and clear.

The joined choruses of the churches sang prayers along the way. Church banners — in silver, gold, and the bright colors of the ancient icon paintings — hovered over the crowd. The Bishop led the procession.

The Bishop of Harbin was an old, smallish man with the wistful face of an innocent child. That round face expressed all the stability of a non-questioning faith, which could look at the hell of life and believe in God, see a corpse and believe in its resurrection, see a crime and pity the murderer. His was that beautiful, blithe acceptance of life known only among Christians. He was one of those who knew that the explanation of life cannot be found in the transitory, woeful changes of material existence, but in the wisdom which comes after one has experienced and accepted them.

Tens of thousands of people followed the Bishop, for practically none, except

those too old or too small, would remain at home on such a day.

That day seemed to be always the coldest throughout the year; still, men walked bareheaded, their beards covered with hoar frost, even their eyebrows, their eyelashes. The clergy, about forty in number, stood around the Bishop while he performed the rite of plunging the cross thrice into the font, which was to make that water pure and holy for that single day.

Then people approached the font one by one and took away water in bottles. This water had to be preserved throughout the year, until another Epiphany, and it was made to serve different purposes. It was sprinkled over a sick child, or in a new house, or in a garden.

The last item of the ritual was the bathing of the volunteers. Bathing in that cold was a rather venturesome deed. Usually the bathers wore bathing suits and fur coats (one's own or one lent for the occasion). They would take off the coats, remain for a moment in the open, to accustom themselves to the change of temperature, and then, making the sign of the cross, plunge into the font of Jordan. The first touch of water would be felt as hot, even burning; then a terrible shock would bring the realization of cold. One would hurry out of the water. The coat would be thrown on and the bather driven home.

When the Bishop bent and plunged the golden cross into the waters, all the crowd sang. Following the old custom, people opened the cages with birds, especially brought for the occasion. The birds usually were tame doves. They would soar high in the air, over the cross, in slow circular movements. All that singing, the sounds of bells, all that sparkling of light, the brightness of the banners, all that excitement fascinated Lida. She had never seen a Jordan on the ice. It appealed not only to her religious feelings but to her artistic emotions too.

In the afternoon she decided to go and see the Jordan once more, now in the sunset light.

The bank of the river was high. The horizon lay open, before Lida's eyes, and the surface of the river seemed flooded with the purple brightness of the sunset. Here and there people were walking in small groups — holiday strollers, or lovers. The air was fresh and cold and a light wind rose and fell, coming from the open space of the river.

Suddenly she felt somebody touch her arm. With a start Lida came to herself and looked around. Dasha stood beside her.

'Worshipping *the ice* today?' Dasha asked.

'No, *the cross*,' Lida answered.

'That cross?' Dasha said in an intentionally mocking tone and pointed her finger down at the cross, lit with lights of sunset. 'Praying *to that ice*?'

'The cross . . . ' Lida repeated.

'But its substance is *ice*. People were actually worshipping a block of ice today.'

'Dasha,' Lida said gently, 'do you want to say those people were not believers?'

'Believers in what?'

'In *whom* . . . In Christ.'

'Hm,' said Dasha and laughed. 'I don't think anybody now believes in Him — honestly. Some still cling to churches, for churches are such a cosy shelter for the weak.'

'Dasha,' Lida said again, gently. 'The first question is about oneself . . . Why start by doubting others?'

'You are ridiculous. Of course I do not believe. More, *I hate*. Christianity kept progress back. It was given too long a trial as a system — imagine two thousand years utterly useless, completely wasted.'

'Oh!' Lida said and tried to move away.

'Stop!' Dasha caught her hand. 'Let me hear your argument. How could you

believe in one who had all the power and for centuries could withstand the tears and prayers of those who clung to him . . . could see sufferings and never interfere . . . '

'I do not know,' Lida answered. 'I do not even feel a need to know. I have no urge whatever to *question* God. I just believe . . . '

'Sounds rather misty,' Dasha said in a scoffing tone.

'Listen,' Lida said. 'In my family we almost never *speak* of religion. I am not an ardent churchgoer. Even in church, I am attracted mostly by the mystical beauty of the rites. I even cannot say that I pray often. But with all my being I know — and will never doubt — the *existence* of God. I live happily because of it. Dasha,' she said and her voice trembled, 'we both are fatherless . . . but I never feel lonely, or lost, or left alone . . . '

'Ha!' Dasha smiled. 'This is a poor way to talk about religion. What do you think about Christ? Would you die for Him?'

'I?' Lida was as if at a loss for a moment. 'For Him? You mean to be forced to renounce Him and commit a blasphemy? Oh! In that case I would rather die!'

She breathed quickly. Dasha was looking at her with severe, mournful eyes.

'Are you lying?'

'No, I am not.'

They both stood for a while in silence.

Suddenly, without any provocation, Dasha raised both her arms and with her palms uplifted upward, ready to receive, she cried impudently: —

'Hello! God! If Thou art there, strike me now that I may believe in Thee too!'

And she laughed loudly.

Lida — petrified — looked at her. Horror at this intentional blasphemy shook her. She covered her face with her hands and ran blindly away from Dasha.

XV

'Mr. Rind,' Dasha said, 'will you go with me to a meeting today?'

'Why should I go? I should not understand much of it.'

'But this is a special meeting. There will be a delegate from Moscow. He will speak.'

'About what?'

'He will give us an outline of the world situation — suggest the lines of our behavior and activities.'

'Is he someone whom you know personally?'

Dasha was silent for a moment.

'Yes,' she said slowly. 'I know him. We were in the same youth group for a while.'

'Well, when will it take place?'

'Tonight, late. It is a secret meeting. Do not say a word to anybody. We shall have to go to the outskirts of the town to one of the schools there . . .'

This Mr. Rind did not like. But Dasha said the police usually knew about secret meetings, and only pretended to know nothing. According to Dasha, Comrade Bugrov was an outstanding orator, a leader, and his speech would be of great interest. She promised to translate so that Mr. Rind would understand everything.

Dasha came for him at ten o'clock that night. They went on foot. The distant sky sparkled with stars. The daytime bustle and noise was gradually sinking into quietness. A kind of exhilarating freshness filled the air. Dasha seemed excited. She could hardly keep from running to that meeting.

They left the more populated streets and went into the quiet, almost unlit quarters, and the beauty of the night became more visible. Its charm grew in measure as the artificial lights and noise were left farther behind. At the corner of a garden Dasha halted for a moment. She stood with her face uplifted toward stars. Their pale light threw shadows on her childish face. Her eyes narrowed.

'On these marvelous nights,' Dasha said slowly, 'I feel a longing to fly . . . like a bird . . . to new places . . .'

Silent figures moved here and there. Such a number of passers-by seemed unusual for that street at that time. The Comrades were coming to their secret meeting.

Dasha halted and, pushing a board in the fence, stepped into a yard. She made a sign to Mr. Rind to follow, and when he was in she put the board back into the fence.

They were in a garden. Through the branches of the trees, now leafless, a big house was seen, high, dark, and quiet.

To that house Dasha led him. They entered it through a small side door, went down several steps, along a series of corridors, then upstairs. The house was almost unlighted; only here and there a shaded lamp gave light enough to distinguish steps or doors. In spite of darkness, the house seemed strangely alive. A whisper came from above, someone moved ahead, someone breathed behind; beyond the walls, in other rooms, everywhere, cautious voices and muffled sounds were moving in one direction.

They entered a room. It was an auditorium. The big, half-lit room was packed with people. The windows were darkened with shutters and curtains.

Mr. Rind looked round and a sudden excitement took possession of him. After the lonely walk these hundreds of people seemed a bracing change. He felt positively young, boyish. Here were risks and dangers. An adventure. It challenged a daring mood in him.

Dasha held his hand tightly and piloted him to a place where they could sit.

Mr. Rind looked at the people round him. Youth predominated. Boys under twenty with clear eyes, full of eager life. The girls were mostly variations of Dasha's type — simple, even crude in appearance, all poorly clad, with bobbed hair and not the slightest signs of fashion or coquetry. The women had pale and

tired faces and often a kind of masculine clumsiness of manners. There were also elderly men. These did not form a type but were personalities. Mr. Rind was a bit startled at their looks. One was a big and quiet man, who seemed to be a combination of powers — physical, nervous, mental. Another was pale and underweight, with the pathetic eyes of a sick child. The third had flaming eyes of hatred, and the fourth was an incarnation of dull obstinacy and cruelty.

A few spoke in whispers. The majority were quietly sitting and waiting.

The big forceful man and the two others went to the platform. It was not high, only two steps led to it. They sat there at each side of the table. The central place was empty. Behind that central chair there was a door, closed.

The big man had a short conference with his comrades at the table, then stood up and said something. Dasha whispered to Mr. Rind that the committee felt uneasy, Comrade Bugrov still had not come; they wondered if something could have happened to him.

At this very moment the door behind the chair opened and a young man stepped in. A wave of joy — in whispers — rose in the room.

The quick movement that Dasha made — the electric jerk of her head, her sigh, her smile — suddenly opened to Mr. Rind what was in her heart: love was there. She looked at Comrade Bugrov and her eyes shone and her hands trembled.

Bugrov was a young man. He could not be even thirty. He was of medium height, thin and slender. He smiled and his narrowing eyes made him look boyishly aggressive, adventurous, brave . . . Mr. Rind felt that he liked him as he liked Dasha, as if that type of youth had a claim on his affection.

Comrade Bugrov began to speak. His words sounded ponderous in the solemn silence. Dasha, dissolved in her attention, forgot her promise, and Mr. Rind had no translation. But without

understanding his words Mr. Rind knew that Comrade Bugrov could only speak the truth. If his truth was not the universal truth, still it was a sacred truth to Comrade Bugrov himself. The instinctive desire to contradict another's truth awoke instantly, and Mr. Rind tried to break the spell. At the same time a small voice of envy rose in him too: how much easier it was to believe, as the audience did; to put the burden of responsibility on somebody else's shoulders and leave to oneself only a feeling of devotion. How it could simplify life.

But Mr. Rind knew it was not his nature to believe like this. He moved his shoulder, to throw away the spell. He felt he was an alien soul, a mind of a different cast. He was only an observer in this audience with its dead silence.

Then it happened. In the complete silence, in a pause between two of the orator's words, there came a thin metallic squeak. And Dasha, alone among hundreds — suddenly, with the lightning intuition of a loving heart, Dasha alone caught its meaning. With a brief cry she rushed forward, jumped onto the platform, and stood before Comrade Bugrov sheltering him with her body. Mr. Rind had not yet caught his breath, as one after the other came the sounds of three shots. Dasha swayed, but still she stood screening Bugrov, pushing toward the door at the back of the platform.

Bugrov disappeared through that door. The door banged. The auditorium broke into a tumult.

People ran toward all the exits. Mr. Rind saw and heard nothing. He had reached the platform. With one arm supporting Dasha, he tried to open the door through which Bugrov had fled. But the door was now barred on the other side. Dasha slumped against the table, and the weight of her body moved the table and Dasha moved with it.

In all the chaos of cries and movements, Mr. Rind heard only that rasping sound of the table and saw only that

sinking movement of Dasha's body. It seemed a strangely slow movement. He had time enough to understand that she was falling. He caught her in his arms. He held her, and carefully tried to find a better position for her. She grew all the time heavier. He saw her eyes open wide, and heard her voice. She said something. He did not know what. She spoke in Russian. She repeated the words several times, whispering now.

It was as if they were all alone in that room, in the world. He looked at her in heartbreaking despair, and she asked for something, and he could not give it to her. There was nobody and nothing to help.

Suddenly Mr. Rind felt something hot and moist down his front — and with awakening terror he understood that it was blood, that Dasha was wounded and dying.

His will came back to him. They had to get out of there. He had to get her out, to find an ambulance, a doctor, a hospital — help.

Where to go? How to get out? Holding her closer, he felt more and more of her blood moistening his body. Dasha was dying. She was now limp in his arms and her eyes began to cloud. Her lips did not move any more.

Mr. Rind looked around. 'The biggest door must be the shortest way out,' he thought. 'On the street . . . the police must be near somewhere . . . or a car . . . to the hospital . . .'

He carried her to the big door at the back of the auditorium, stepping over the overturned chairs and benches . . . There was no one in the room now. He walked alone with Dasha in his arms.

He found himself in a corridor and then, at last, in the chill winter air.

But he was in a yard, not a street — a yard filled with lumber, with chunks, shavings, and boards.

He stopped for a moment and then clearly heard Dasha say something. Bringing his face very close to hers he whispered:—

'Dear child . . . what is it? Say it in English.'

Then he saw her eyes and understood that she would never speak any more, any language . . . She was dead.

Gently he lowered her body onto some fresh boards.

Mr. Rind stood erect. It was real. He saw her body, himself, and the fragrant new boards . . . stains of blood . . . the white snow . . . all visible in the gray light. All real. . . . All true.

Then he became aware of two men running across the yard. One cried, 'Do not leave the witness behind,' and disappeared around the corner. Mr. Rind did not understand those words. The other man slowly (or so it seemed to Mr. Rind) approached Mr. Rind and looked at him with the calculating eyes of a boxer. But Mr. Rind made not a move. Then the man quickly lifted his hand and struck him a terrible blow on the side of the head. Mr. Rind fell down beside Dasha's body.

Mr. Rind came to, but he did not open his eyes. He tried to crawl back into the darkest corner of his consciousness and remain there a little longer.

But there were people — outside — who disturbed him. They touched him. They spoke to him. No, he would not open his eyes.

Then a soft hand touched his brow and a soft voice said:—

'Mr. Rind, do you hear me?'

Mr. Rind fought the voice. He had successfully crawled back into that cloud which was inside him and was anchored there.

'Mr. Rind,' the voice said again.

No, he would not return. No, he would not. He clutched the cloud, he clung to the screen . . . He liked that space within himself, empty, and dark, and quiet. Mr. Rind wanted to be one with it. Still they tried to tear him away.

'I am sure,' the voice said, 'he is Mr. Rind. Telephone the American Consul.'

Mr. Rind returned to his darkness.

Swiftly he enveloped himself in it, and lay quiet.

Later, suddenly he opened his eyes. They met chaos. All was in a quick, disorderly movement. He closed them, then opened again. Things were now moving in circles. There was a window, and an open door with darkness behind, faces, parts of other things. Their movement made thin luminous lines. Then things began to move more slowly. They moved toward two centres — one was the window with light in it, the other was Mr. Rind himself. His body established the balance and movement stopped. Things were fixed now.

It was a room. He was lying in a bed. Daylight was behind the window. Several persons were standing at his bedside.

'You are all right,' a man said. He was clad in white. 'You are quite all right. Your skull is not broken. You may leave the hospital before long. Your Consul will be here soon and he will arrange everything . . .'

Mr. Rind made a movement and said: —

'What happened?'

The man put his hand on Mr. Rind's shoulder and said: —

'Be quiet. The Consul will tell you all.'

'But why am I here?'

'The police brought you here. This happened to be the nearest hospital.'

Then Mr. Rind remembered.

'Oh,' he cried, 'that child!' and a fit of shaking swept him.

The day was hazy. People coming in, — friends, police, the Consul, — all looking at Mr. Rind, all talking, asking questions, nodding heads and sympathetically smiling. The vision of them was mixed with the pain in his head and the clouds in his thoughts. All visitors stepped heavily, especially the police, and breathed noisily, especially the Consul. The doctors all the time touched either him or the icebag on Mr. Rind's head. There was no peace, no quiet.

In the middle of the day when Mr.

Rind was, at last, left alone with a nurse, the door was suddenly flung open and Comrade Bugrov quickly stepped in. The nurse barred his way, but he pushed her aside with a quick gesture and approached Mr. Rind's bed. He bent low over the bed, looked at Mr. Rind with eyes which seemed sunken deeply and reflected no light, and Mr. Rind thought with astonishment that Comrade Bugrov was almost old. The visitor took Mr. Rind's hand, squeezed it with force and said something, then abruptly turned away and left the room.

XVI

Lida's last days at Harbin were filled to overflowing. Even the fact that there were still no letters from Jimmy was withstood much easier by now. Perhaps there were letters laid neatly in her box at home, waiting. Why not? On this earth where everything, everything, might happen, is it such a miracle to find letters waiting for one?

Her last concert was a brilliant success. She found herself the object of wonder and envy of so many other Russian girls — she seemed to be the happy one, the lucky one. Having such a voice and talent, such a teacher — all free, and also a bridegroom in America, where every girl — every one! — has a permanent, and lacquers her nails, and eats chocolate and just gorges with orange juice — all that was to be Lida's . . .

She stood in the hall of the club after her last concert, surrounded by friends and admirers who wished to say good-bye. Flowers, which are so expensive for the poor people in the winter, were given to Lida. The Belle of the Town, with Mr. Capella and the florist as escorts, approached Lida and smiled at her. And Miss Clark, an American girl who was visiting Harbin, cried out in loud approval of Lida, her looks, her dress, her voice, and her general 'cuteness.'

'Isn't she lovely?' she exclaimed, as if

Lida were an inanimate thing. Then, suddenly seeing Lida's brooch, — it was the only one Lida had, — she cried again in rapture: —

'Isn't her brooch *cute*? Isn't it just *divine*?'

With an almost unconscious gesture, a hereditary movement coming to Lida from generations of her ancestors who were rich, and to whom giving things away was a natural action, Lida unpinned her brooch and offered it to Miss Clark: —

'Will you kindly take it as a souvenir from me?'

And Miss Clark, with the no less natural gesture of one who was accustomed to take things for herself, took the brooch crying: —

'Oh, I must not! I simply must not.' But she clutched at it, for she liked pretty jewels.

'Thank you,' she said, turning her back on Lida. 'Good-bye,' and she walked away. But somewhere in her memory she carried away that gentle vision of Lida, with her clear eyes and her lovely smile, and her hand outstretched with her single jewel, gallantly offered to the one who was all covered with jewelry.

The next morning Lida and Mme. Manuilova left for Tientsin. The Platov family was laughing and crying at the railway station. Lida held a box of chocolate sent by Mr. Rind, who was not yet fully recovered and planned to recuperate for a little longer in Harbin. The train moved out of the station and cut off a whole period of Lida's life.

Those weeks of life at Harbin, their speed, novelty, excitement, turmoil, the sudden passage from one emotion to another, had engulfed the real Lida, leaving no time for things to be well laughed at, wept over, and then forgotten.

Now she was going home, to Mother, to that room in the attic, which was the true centre of her universe and life. She

was looking forward to resting her brain and her emotions. She needed Mother. She would bring her all that she had seen and felt. But out of all that tumult rose a gigantic doubt: had life any logic, any justice, any explanatory truth?

'What is *my* place in all that?' she thought as the train moved steadily toward Tientsin. 'I want to marry Jimmy. I would be satisfied with only that. But is that sufficient for life? There must be a spiritual base to it. What is my religion? My political credo? My social duty? Or am I an egoist, limited and narrow, who can live without all that so long as there is a Jimmy. Even loving music so much, what am I doing about my artistic career? Some people say I should go to Russia and have a real schooling in Moscow. Can I go? Do I want to go? If I love art so much, shouldn't I think long before choosing Jimmy and love, instead of Moscow and the school?'

So her thoughts gently slid into their habitual channel, and again she was thinking not of her future, but of her love.

Mme. Manuilova sat opposite, her face sallow from fatigue, her eyes half shut. She resembled a mask of stone over which Life had patiently worked years and years, in order to bring it to that degree of expressiveness.

Suddenly Lida shivered all over: —

'What a face she has! Why have I never thought of her like that, so terribly, terribly tired and sad.'

And a feeling of shame filled her: —

'How little we people care for each other! How little I have been interested in her! I was eager about *my* music, *my* singing, but was I ever interested in her, attentive, tender?'

She was smitten with the poignant realization of that.

'Why has she such a face? Why is *she* so sad?'

Lightly, cautiously she moved her hand and tenderly touched Mme. Manuilova's fingers. The latter opened her

eyes. They were distant, void of any relation to reality.

'Evening . . .' Lida said slowly, 'the evening.' And she moved her head toward the window.

'Oh . . .' Mme. Manuilova said low, and looked toward the window. Then she moved her head away, as if the sight of the evening was painful to her.

'I must not,' Lida thought, 'I must not disturb her.'

Some things have a peculiar power of bringing pain. Hidden at daylight, they fearlessly creep forth in darkness. For Lida those steel clicks of the wheels of the railway car became unbearable. She put her face close to the window-pane and seeing above a small single star, in the whole of the sky, she thought:—

'I must fight my sorrow. I will look at that star and think of my love.'

They came to Tientsin in the evening.

The town seemed smaller, the lights fewer. Only the cinemas flared forth with their flippant neon show, inviting all to have a look at life as it was for another people in another country. Homeless dogs, attracted by the smell of food coming from the houses of human beings, stood wearily where the scents seemed sharper, musing, if they could muse, about the injustice of distribution of food in no proportion to hunger. But hunger is duller toward evening, as pain is duller before death. Let those sleep who have not eaten.

Everything made for sadness. But her house almost stepped forth from the row to meet Lida, and the cook flung the door open. The Countess with her quiet smile, Leon with his polite bow, Dog with his carefully restrained greetings, and Mother . . . Mother running downstairs to kiss Lida. And the room in the attic, so much shrunken as if with age . . .

No, there were no letters . . .

Mother, quick with a remedy, said:—

'Now you sit down, and I'll bring in

the tea. We'll have a nice evening together.'

'No, mother, I will bring the tea. The staircase is too tiring for you . . .'

In the kitchen, which looked uninviting because it was too clean and empty, Cook was sitting at the table, reading. A book lay before him, a Chinese book in a paper cover, with pages thin and light, transparent almost. Cook made no movements, he never turned pages. He sat motionlessly, his old eyes looking intensively at the same lines.

'What an odd manner of reading,' Lida thought. She felt reluctant to interrupt; still her sorrow weighed heavy; she longed for a human word, whatever it might be, just not to be alone in the world, while boiling tea.

'Cook, what are you reading?'

'This.' He showed the book with a slight movement of his head.

'What is it about?'

'This: the five Heavenly Virtues are Justice, Magnanimity, Politeness, Understanding, Faithful Execution of Duty.'

He quoted the celestial virtues in their Chinese names. Lida did not understand and felt no interest.

'Cook,' she said, and her voice broke.

He turned his head at that sound and gave her a strangely lucid glance.

'Cook . . . when your heart . . . aches, what do you usually do?'

'I tell nobody.'

It was easier in the attic room. Mother poured tea, and Lida opened a 'confidential' letter from Dima. The first sentence of the letter made her laugh:—

'Dear Lida, how is Dog?'

Something clicked in the mechanism of life, and Lida was switched in, where she belonged—into the room in the attic, at the same place, to the same hopes and anxiety, as if there had been no change.

Her spirit of vagrancy rose and fell. She looked at Dog, a demure symbol of tamed wilderness. She looked around the room and sighed: a Penelope, ready to undo her tapestry.

XVII

Life became for Lida what it had been before: a hope.

She had received no letters.

Letters. The birds of love. In the morning they leave their nest, a hot, a throbbing heart, and fly forth, into the unknown. Days and nights they soar all over the world in search of the heart for which they are intended. Some reach the goal, but many are shot in flight while they still soar, or die in the cold winds, or rain, or snow. These fall down, small stones, to be trodden upon and forgotten.

She was reluctant to make anxiety her only occupation and tried to find some sort of job. Of course, it was hopeless. She talked to Mme. Manuilova, who promised to ask Mrs. Brown.

Mrs. Brown was not a person whom one could see when one liked. One can see the face of the sun whenever one wishes, but not that of Mrs. Brown. It meant more waiting, anxiety and hope again.

Meanwhile Lida started crying. She established her own ritual for it. She liked to be alone, at twilight, undisturbed. After a good fit of tears, she felt mentally dull, physically exhausted, yet somehow relieved.

Once, upon his return home late in the evening, Leon heard strange sounds. It sounded like a child quietly moaning somewhere. He listened for a while. The sounds came from behind the door leading to the attic stairs. He stood listening for a while longer and then cautiously opened the door. On the steps of a dark and narrow passage Lida was sleeping, exhausted with tears. Her tender face was resting on her bent arm. He saw it in profile. Under the uncertain light from the hall, Lida reclining on the dusty steps was a pathetic sight. The muscles of her face moved at intervals and she gave out convulsive sighs, which bore witness to how much, and how long, she had sobbed.

For a while he stood in silence. Then he knelt before Lida, on the dusty steps, and touched her shoulder.

'Lida,' he said low.

She was up, suddenly, in a nervous jerk.

'What? What is it?'

She saw Leon. She stretched both her arms to him and, embracing him in search of help and consolation, she put her head on his shoulder and began to sob.

He smoothed her blonde hair with a slow movement of his hand and said low:—

'Tell me, what is it about?'

He knew. But he was loath to pronounce the words he learned to hate: 'letters' and 'Jimmy.'

She said them.

'Leon,' she said, 'I cannot bear it any longer. Believe me, something happened to Jimmy. I must know . . . The mail from the states still comes in regularly. If he has not written, something is wrong with him.'

Again she clung to him, as a child would to its mother, and wept.

'Lida,' Leon said, 'I can help you. I think I can find out what happened . . .'

'But *how*? Oh, Leon, how will you do that?'

'There are ways. If I had known you felt so badly, I would have done it earlier . . . Tell me his address. There must be a Spanish Consul somewhere there. I will send a cablegram and ask him to find that out for me.'

'He would?'

'He will. And he will send us a cablegram.'

'Oh, Leon!' Lida gave a deep sigh, and suddenly, exhausted of emotion, she sat in a lump, tired and lifeless. Then, again, a fit of energy lifted her:—

'But do that! Go! Now! Go, there . . . Send the cablegram.'

'I will,' Leon said shortly. He rose, helped her to her feet, kissed her hand, and went out. He went straight to the telegraph office.

News came sooner than they expected.

As was her custom during those days, Lida had been standing at the window waiting for the messenger. She stood there now every single moment when she was free, on the watch for her fate.

The cablegram was businesslike. Jimmy had been badly hurt in an accident. He was in the hospital. There was hope for his complete recovery. But the situation was grave. More details were promised in a letter to follow.

Lida read it. She began to read fast, with her heart high in her throat and eyes dilated; then she read slower and slower . . . No . . . she began from the beginning, then again from the beginning — and slowly, in a wrapping movement, the realization of what it meant formed in her mind. The world began to topple down silently, to fall into dust, crumbling without a single sound. All, all that was life turned into ashes, and then into nothingness. She was alone, as if hanging in an utter void, in a quietly darkening vacuum, deserted even by the darkening light, in the emptiness of an eternity. When she understood every last word there was no light any more. Lida saw nothing.

That was the beginning of three weeks of nervous illness. Hours of quietness, near to lethargy, would be interrupted by fits of activity. She would cry, explain that she must go to Berkeley, implore everyone to help her, to buy her a ticket, to get her visas; she would write letters, telegrams — all concluded with a fit of sobbing and the state near to a coma again.

She grew very pale and thin. She had constant dizziness and unusual difficulties in her sight when all seemed blurred, colorless, without depth. She needed constant care and attention.

While Mother tried to give her all the help and comfort at home, Leon proved to be most efficient in trying to get news from Berkeley.

‘Leave all that to me,’ he would say.

‘Believe me, Lida, I shall do everything by myself, in order to get the most detailed and quickest news.’

The question of going to Jimmy was pushed away — although gently — as childish. To go where? To whom? How? To get visas would take *months*, to say nothing about money for tickets, waiting for a free place on the liner, for many foreigners were leaving China and cabins were taken for months ahead.

The letter, finally received, was from Jimmy’s mother. It was short and definite: the boy was not to be disturbed with anything. His state required the utmost care. When he was well enough to read letters, his mail would be given to him. Meanwhile Lida had to wait.

Leon spent hours in the room, writing what Lida asked him to write, answering the same questions about Jimmy, or just sitting quietly when Lida had one of her spells of lifelessness.

One thing more aggravated the situation. Knowing when the accident happened made it clear that Jimmy had not written a single line a month before it had taken place. This period of silence, previous to the accident, seemed inexplicable.

Mother and the Countess decided to let Lida alone for a while, not to press any advice upon her.

Visitors came, of course, to make the burden easier or heavier. Mme. Manuilova was severe: —

‘Get up and start to work. Do not squander youth and energy in deploring things which did not happen. The really great things are but few: art, religion, science. Take up one. Believe me, there is no better happiness than an attachment to higher ideals . . .’

Lida listened with a wandering look . . .

Mme. Manuilova grew almost angry: —

‘Do not look for that commonest fate of a girl: to find one’s happiness only in men’s arms. You, who can sing and, perhaps, write music . . . Remember my words: when your life will be spent, you

will, perhaps, regret many things — that you loved, that you married, that you did or did not have a child; but you will never regret that you sang well . . .’

Lida tried to look politely attentive, but said nothing in answer.

Mme. Klimova came. Of course, she offered her sympathy, but still she just had to tell Lida what she really thought.

She confessed she had been shocked by the extent of Lida’s grief. She found it unbecoming for a girl of a good family, indecent, even a thing to be speculatively wondered at. *What* was Jimmy to Lida, after all? A husband? No. A lover? No. A bridegroom? Not exactly. Jimmy’s parents had never made any move to meet Lida’s family and her friends. Then why this shocking despair? She had never seen such exhibitions of despair over a broken engagement from well-educated girls with self-esteem. Love? No, in good society love is not allowed girls; they leave it to lower classes. ‘Be reasonable,’ she went on, ‘leave love alone. “Great lovers” look only ridiculous in this era of refrigerators and cold storage. Listen to me: get up . . . look round. You have, perhaps, still a chance to be a countess. A *countess!*’ she said once more, and even clasped her hands. ‘And you, crazy with that “epistolary” love of yours. It smells eighteenth century, a “love in letters.” In your case, even the letters did not come, were not at all written. And having no pride you go on loving. Forget that childishness. Do not keep the Pacific Ocean busy with your letters.’

XVIII

Lida’s convalescence dated from the visit of the Mother Abbess.

After having called on all the Russian convents, Mother Abbess was proceeding to Shanghai ‘to die in peace,’ as she put it.

Painfully she climbed the stairs and all out of breath took a chair at Lida’s bedside.

‘Poor little bird,’ she said and shook

her head in her high black hood. ‘Love! What woman would not understand your heart, my dear child. Fifty years ago, I was only eighteen then, I dreamed of love too . . . I remember it even now . . . And in a convent one does not hear much about love. One sees no men. But I dreamed . . . if only a young man should happen near me, be he ugly, or foolish, or lame or a hunchback . . . if he only came along and said he loved me, I would break my religious vows and run after him. But great was the mercy of Our Lady . . . She protected me . . . Nobody came along . . .’ she heavily sighed and made a sign of the cross over herself, ‘thank Our Lady!’

This confession was so unexpected, so utterly unbecoming and out of place, that her companion, Mother Tais — petrified — could not make a single movement to interfere and to interrupt. She only flushed darkly and apoplectically. When she recovered herself, ‘Mother Abbess!’ she groaned, ‘you told us a nice joke!’

‘A joke!’ Mother Abbess cried with indignation. ‘Listen to her! We are speaking about love, the greatest power of nature, and she calls it a *joke!* It might have been a “joke” to some people, then, but not to a young nun shut in a monastery and tied with vows. One must be a quite insane youth to think about love jokingly.’

And after a dead silence in the room she added again: ‘A nun *must* tell the truth, you know.’

Then, returning to Lida and her sorrow, Mother Abbess patted the girl tenderly on the shoulder and said:—

‘You sing well, dear child. Go on singing. Come to the church and sing. Our Lady likes good singing, she will listen to you.’

The Countess invited them all down to tea, but Mother Abbess said she would come later. It was evident she wanted to be alone with Lida.

‘Do not listen to foolish people,’ she whispered to the girl. ‘Go on your way.’

I know a secret and I will tell it to you. It is a very old truth, nevertheless it always works.'

And bending closer she asked:—

'Have you faith in your heart? Faith in happiness?'

'Oh,' Lida said slowly, 'when now I look into my heart . . . I refuse to believe all is over . . . No. I feel Jimmy cannot be taken from me . . . or forget me.'

'Then everything will be all right. You will have a happy life with him.'

'How do you know, Mother Abbess?'

'Here is the secret. If, in all simplicity of heart, with a pure childish faith, one wants something and keeps wanting it and asking for it, and goes on believing in spite of whatever happens, never admitting any doubts—one always gets one's heart's desire.'

'Always?'

'Always, without a single exception! That is how miracles come into being.'

'But, Mother Abbess, why then do people get only a few miracles of happiness?'

'They want too *many* things at once.'

Lida pushed her feet into slippers.

'Well,' Mother Abbess said suddenly in a changed voice, quite matter-of-fact now, 'is this *your* room?'

'N-no.'

'Whose is it then?'

'Leon's.'

'Well, and where does he live?'

'I . . . I do not know.'

'Hm . . . And how long have you been here?'

'Two . . . no, three weeks . . .'

'Hm . . . about time to say thank you for it.'

'Mother Abbess,' Lida cried, 'I am so much better . . . I can go to the attic and . . .'

'Of course. And do not forget to tell them "Excuse me for the trouble"—ah?'

'Oh, Mother Abbess . . . I . . .'

'You are *not* ill after all . . . Let other people have their rooms then . . .'

'I will go now.'

'About time, my dear.'

When they appeared in the Diaz living room, people were bewildered. It was Lida's first appearance.

'Now give us tea, please,' Mother Abbess asked the Countess.

Later Lida quietly discussed with Mother the line of her future behavior toward Jimmy. It was agreed that she would send a letter twice a month, not oftener. The rest was left to fate and Jimmy's own initiative. Once more Lida's life became a *hope*.

XIX

It was a morning in early May.

The sky was clear, the air was pure. A slight breeze came from the sea, whispering something and hurrying away toward the hills with the same news.

That was the day of Leon's departure to Spain. He was leaving alone, ahead of his family, who were to follow later.

His last day was dedicated to Lida, and a series of pleasures had to take place: a long morning drive in a taxi, dinner in the restaurant, a show at the cinema.

One cannot have a very long drive in Tientsin. The complicated laws of concessions, the military zones in the town, the Japanese arsenals, the poverty-stricken Chinese areas, and especially the absence of good roads of considerable length made any drive a movement in time rather than in space.

Leon and Lida just sat in a taxi moving at leisure in the directions of least resistance and fewest sentinels.

From time to time the taxi would be stopped and the chauffeur would enter a long discussion with the sentinels as to the real motives of the passengers' drive and the possible harm they could bring upon the existent order. If the intercourse threatened to be very long, Lida and Leon left the chauffeur to carry the burden of diplomacy alone—he was paid by the hour, anyway. They would

walk a little, or Leon would buy a souvenir for Lida in memory of that particular place.

Still there were many things worth seeing.

It was a great holiday in the Japanese concession, for instance. It was the birthday of all boys.

At every one of the Japanese houses high poles had been erected and images of fish displayed on banners. The banners were made of cotton and gayly painted. They fluttered in the air, swollen with the moving breeze. The fish seemed alive, with their protruding eyes and finely painted scales.

The number of banners of fish corresponded to the quantity of sons in the family, and their size was kept in proportion to the age of the boys. The biggest fish had to be fastened highest, the rest of them also placed in the accepted hierarchy of human relations. The image of the fish always represented a carp. It had been chosen centuries ago as a symbol of indomitable courage.

The Japanese are mostly fishermen. They know fish well. In their conception, a carp is the bravest and noblest of all fish. Cut up alive, on a kitchen table, it would lie fearlessly and motionlessly under the knife opening its bowels, looking straight into the cook's eyes.

In all the kingdom of animals, in the Japanese conception, the carp shows best how one has to meet death. A samurai of a fish. Our men of science seem to know nothing of that. In a dictionary, opposite the word 'carp' is written 'a cyp-rinoid physostomous fish.' Who would guess what a superfish is hidden behind that dry definition?

Japan needs her boys brave, healthy, indomitable, to be soldiers, to know how to fight and how to die, emulating the carp — looking straight into the eyes of that cook who cuts human lives off.

But life in the Chinese part of the town was mostly funeral processions. Those two widely different worlds were separated by a white line painted across

the pavement. That thin layer of white symbolized the impregnable will of millions of people to die rather than surrender.

The same lines of white divided the other places of the town too: the French concession from the British, the British from the German. It remained a line if those two were, or made believe they were, friendly. It rose as a wall of barbed wire and sandbags if the pretension had been cast off.

One had to encircle perhaps half the globe to find so many omens about the future of humanity. But Leon and Lida were heedless of omens.

Lida felt, if not happy, then excited. Leon was taking with him a letter for Jimmy. He promised to send it by airmail from the most convenient point, with instructions that an answer could be sent the same way. With luck, one could exchange letters with the United States in two or three weeks. Suppose Jimmy should write!

They had a good dinner in a restaurant. They talked about love — not theirs, but in general. Lida tried not to notice the profundity of drama that kept crawling into the conversation: —

'The world is full of women,' she tried to console Leon.

'Not many of them are very lovable,' he answered.

'What is your objection? Looks?'

'No. But I could never love a girl if she were vulgar, greedy, flippant. I could not love a girl without a feeling for music . . .'

'Dear, dear!' Lida laughed. 'I hope you will still find somebody answering the description.'

The picture at the cinema was not impressive at all. Even the actors and actresses were not good-looking, which was rather a grave fault. The cinema, being a conventional representation of life, would be more enjoyable if it kept on giving illusions rather than life in flat.

And then they had to say good-bye.

For a moment Lida felt a poignant feeling of guilt.

'Leon,' she said, 'I have behaved so abominably toward you that I hope you do not love me any more.'

'But I do.'

'How do you know?'

'I look at you and light seems brighter. You smile — and there is no sorrow in the world. I touch your hand — and there is no sadness, only joy. You talk to me — and . . .'

'Oh,' Lida interrupted, 'I see. But I hope you will soon marry and have a family and be happy.'

He was silent.

'Will you?'

'I think I shall, in time. I shall marry, I shall have a family, I shall be happy. Only my love will be different from this one. A first love is like youth, unforgettable. One continues to live after it is gone. One can be contented and happy. Still it would never be the same as youth. One would feel always sorry and never forget it completely. And how do you feel about your life?'

'I?' Lida said. 'I belong to my fate. You know, sometimes one feels wronged in sharing. Sometimes it seems others' lots are so much richer. But then, if Fate should ask one, "Would you like to be the Queen of France?" one is at first dazzled, eager to jump into it. Then one wonders, and finally one finds one's own life so full of gentleness, of meaning, that one refuses to change it for something else. My fate and myself are one. We cannot be torn and each part fitted into another setting. I shall bring myself into

any setting, and think the same, and wish the same, and dream the same, and my setting, accordingly, will turn the same again.'

At the moment of parting Lida said gently: —

'Leon, forgive me, if I have made you unhappy.'

He gallantly kissed her hand.

'You only make me happy, whatever you do to me. Love, whatever its course, is a happy experience. I am thankful to you for that. Even when you refused me, you made me happy. If you would marry me after I regained my fortune I would be happy with you, still the idea that you have chosen me when rich would put you in a less brilliant light. Now I have lost you, but I shall keep my belief in women and their pride and their devotion. Seeing you so loyal to a man who does not repay you with the same attention . . .'

'Do not speak so about Jimmy, or we shall quarrel.'

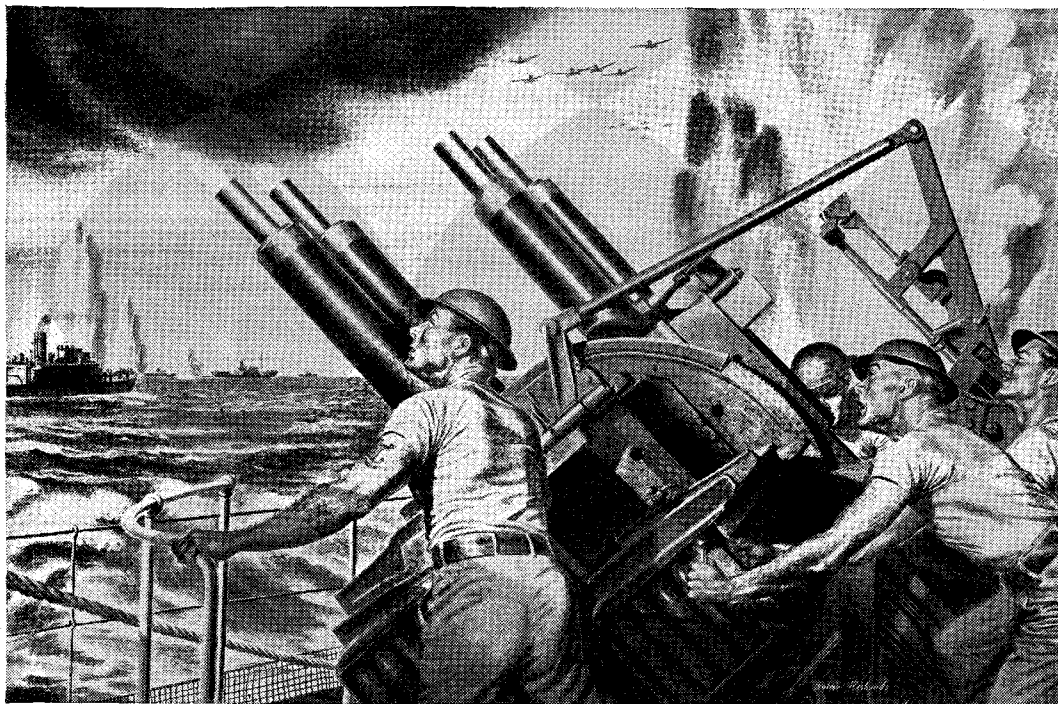
They laughed and with smiles said their good-byes.

The next week Lida was packing too. In accordance with Mme. Manuilova's program, she was going to Shanghai to sing there. She packed her three dresses, the same three she had worn at Harbin, and made a list of the persons she had to see in Shanghai. Her list was short: Mother Abbess, Mme. Militza the fortune-teller, and Vladimir Platov. She wrote down the addresses: the convent, the fortune-teller's office, and the Black Glove cabaret, where Vladimir played the violin at nights.

'To be concluded)

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